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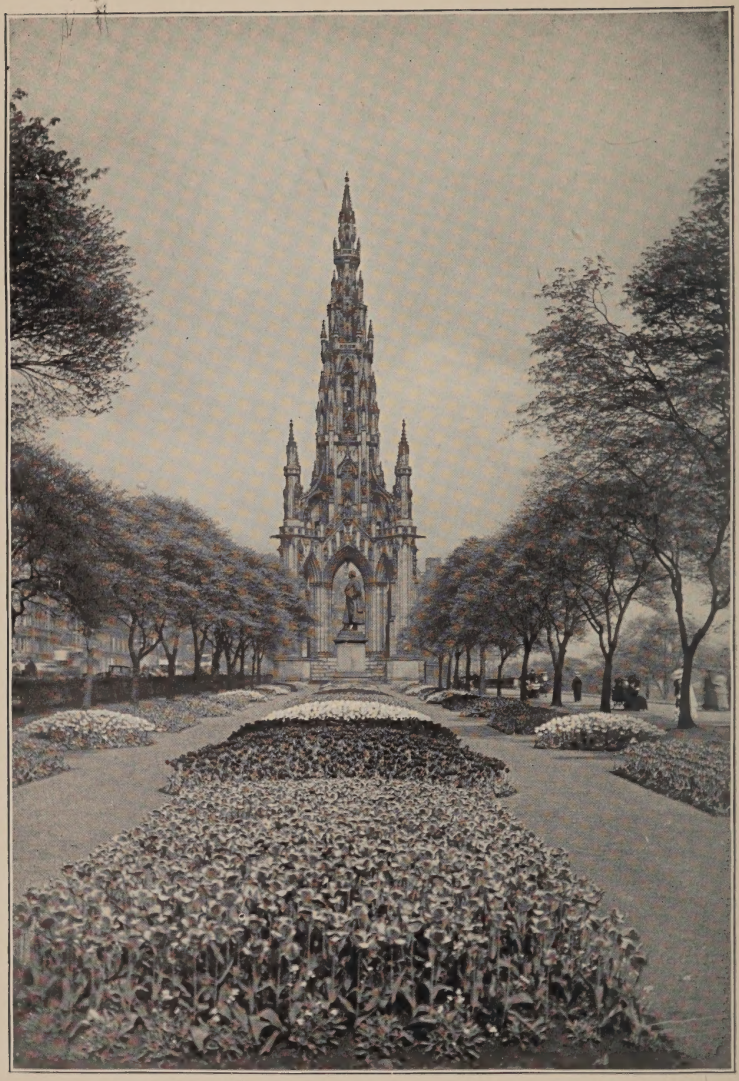
Caledonian Edition

THE COUNTRY OF

# Sir Walter Scott

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME II



SCOTT MONUMENT, EDINBURGH

# THE COUNTRY OF SIR WALTER SCOTT

BY

CHARLES S. OLCOTT

*Author of George Eliot: Scenes and People of Her Novels*

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS
BY THE AUTHOR

VOLUME II

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# CONTENTS


XIV. The Heart of Midlothian . . . . 199
XV. The Bride of Lammermoor . . . . 215
XVI. A Legend of Montrose . . . . 224
XVII. Ivanhoe . . . . . 234
XVIII. The Monastery . . . . . 255
XIX. The Abbot . . . . . 265
XX. Kenilworth . . . . . 272
XXI. The Pirate . . . . . 290
XXII. The Fortunes of Nigel . . . . 316
XXIII. Peveril of the Peak . . . . . 328
XXIV. Quentin Durward . . . . . 337
XXV. St. Ronan's Well . . . . . 346
XXVI. Redgauntlet . . . . . 355
XXVII. Tales of the Crusaders . . . . 365
XXVIII. Woodstock . . . . . 371
XXIX. The Fair Maid of Perth . . . . 378
XXX. The Chronicles of the Canongate and Other Tales . . . . . 387
The Highland Widow . . . . 390
The Two Drovers . . . . . 390
The Surgeon's Daughter . . . 391
Anne of Geierstein . . . . 391
Count Robert of Paris . . . 392
Castle Dangerous . . . . . 393
XXXI. A Successful Life . . . . . 395
Index . . . . . 407

# ILLUSTRATIONS


THE SCOTT MONUMENT, EDINBURGH . . . *Frontispiece*

ST. ANTHONY'S CHAPEL . . . . . 210

CRICHTON CASTLE . . . . . 222

LOCH LUBNAIG . . . . . 230

MAP OF ENGLAND . . . . . 234
Showing localities of Scott's writings

CASTLE OF ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH . . . . . 236

THE BUCK-GATE . . . . . 238
Entrance to the Duke of Portland's estate, Sherwood Forest

THE AVENUE OF LIMES, SHERWOOD FOREST . . . . 240

INTERIOR OF FOUNTAINS ABBEY . . . . . 244

CONINGSBURGH CASTLE . . . . . 248

CATHCART CASTLE . . . . . 270

LEICESTER'S BUILDINGS, KENILWORTH . . . . . 274

CÆSAR'S TOWER, KENILWORTH . . . . . 278

ENTRANCE TO WARWICK CASTLE . . . . . 282

MERVYN'S TOWER, KENILWORTH . . . . . 286

LERWICK, SHETLAND . . . . . 292

A CROFTER'S COTTAGE, ORKNEY . . . . . 294

SUMBURGH HEAD, SHETLAND . . . . . 298

SCALLOWAY, SHETLAND . . . . . 302

THE STANDING STONES OF STENNIS . . . . . 310

STROMNESS, ORKNEY . . . . . 314

MAP OF LONDON . . . . . 318
Showing localities of Scott's writings

THE PACK-HORSE BRIDGE, HADDON HALL . . . . 330

# ILLUSTRATIONS


THE SAXON TOWER, ISLE OF MAN . . . . . 334

THE TWEED AND EILDON HILLS . . . . . 348

SCOTT'S TOMB, DRYBURGH . . . . . 352

HODDAM CASTLE . . . . . 360

POWIS CASTLE, WALES . . . . . 368

GODSTOW PRIORY . . . . . 374

Burial-place of 'The Fair Rosamond

LOCH TAY . . . . . 380

HOUSE OF THE FAIR MAID OF PERTH . . . . . 384

ABBOTSFORD . . . . . 396

# THE COUNTRY OF SIR WALTER SCOTT

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN

'Dis-is-de-heart-of-Midlothian-Jeanie-Deans-walked-t'-Lunnon-t'-save-her-sister-fr'm-hangin!' This sentence, uttered rapidly in a monotone, as though it were all a single word, long-drawn-out, startled us as we were standing in Parliament Square, Edinburgh, looking up at the stately crown which forms the distinguishing mark of the old Cathedral of St. Giles. Our eyes quickly dropped, to meet the wistful, upturned face of a small urchin, very ragged and very dirty. 'What is that you say?' said I, looking down into his expectant eyes. 'Dis-is-de-heart-of-Midlothian-Jeanie-Deans-walked-to-Lunnon, sir,' was the reply, in the same quick accents, running the words all together. 'Why did she do that?' I asked, hoping to draw him out. 'To save her sister from hangin', sir,' was the ready reply. 'But who was Jeanie Deans and how did she save her sister?' To this double inquiry the boy only shook his head. 'Where did you hear that story?' Another shake. 'Did you ever hear of Sir Walter Scott?' Another slow movement of a downcast head indicated that the little lad was hopelessly out of his depth, so I gave him his penny and let him go. He had evidently learned his lesson by heart from some one

whom instinct had taught that this reference to one of the most popular novels of Edinburgh's most famous citizen would be likely to prove the readiest means of interesting the casual tourist and thereby extracting an honest penny. All the other objects of interest, — the fine old Cathedral, the Parliament House, the Market Cross, the grave of John Knox — were as nothing compared to the figure of a heart, outlined in the pavement, designed to mark the site of the old Tolbooth, but more strongly reminding the visitor, not of an ancient prison, but of a great novel, and impressing him with the feeling that, wherever one may go in Edinburgh, the spirit of Sir Walter Scott seems to permeate the very atmosphere.

The square in which we were standing was for centuries the civic centre of Edinburgh. The southwest corner is occupied by the House of Parliament, where the Scottish Parliaments met in a room, a hundred and twenty-two feet long and forty-nine feet wide, with an arched oaken roof. Since the union of England and Scotland under the name of Great Britain, in 1707, and the consequent dissolution of the Scottish Parliament, the building has been used by the Court of Session. In the rooms of the First Division, on the left of the lobby, Sir Walter Scott, as one of the Principal Clerks, performed his official duties for twenty-five years. His attendance averaged from four to six hours daily during the sessions of the court, which usually occupied two months in the late spring and early summer, and four in the winter. His letter of resignation, in the last year but one of his life, is one of the valued treasures of the Advocates' Library.

In the first half of the eighteenth century, the period

of 'The Heart of Midlothian,' Parliament Close, as it was then called, did not present the clean, open appearance of to-day. Almost the entire space between St. Giles on the east and the County Hall on the west was occupied by the Tolbooth, leaving only a narrow and partly covered passage at the northwest corner of the square. The prison projected into the middle of High Street, seeming to form 'the termination of a huge pile of buildings called the Luckenbooths,' which had been 'jammed into the midst of the principal street,' and little booths or shops were plastered against the buttresses of the old Gothic cathedral. The headquarters of the 'City Guard' were in 'a long, low, ugly building, which to a fanciful imagination might have suggested the idea of a long black snail crawling up the middle of the High Street and deforming its beautiful esplanade.' In this way, what was intended to be and is now a broad street was at that time so encumbered as to be converted into a series of narrow, crooked lanes, which were kept in anything but tidy condition. South of High Street the Cowgate was reached by descending the steep incline through various narrow lanes, and the two parallel thoroughfares were connected, a little to the east, by a crooked but famous street, called West Bow. At the foot of the latter was a wide, open space known as the Grassmarket, where the public executions took place. These were the streets through which the rioters of the Porteous Mob made their way in the exciting days of September, 1736.

The Tolbooth, considered two centuries ago to be one of the largest and most sombre buildings in the kingdom, was built by the citizens of Edinburgh in 1561, origi-

nally for a Town Hall, but later devoted to the use of Parliament and the courts of justice. With the completion of the Parliament House in 1640, its original usage ceased, and from that time until its demolition in 1817, it was devoted exclusively to the imprisonment of debtors and criminals. No distinction was made between the lowest of the criminal classes and the poor persons whose only offence was the inability to pay some small debt. The latter were shut up for months in cells too loathsome for the most vicious of criminals. There were no areas for exercise nor any ways of affording the captives a breath of fresh air. The narrow windows were half-blocked to the light by massive bars of iron.

The exterior was not less horrible, for on its highest pinnacle were displayed the heads of prisoners of state who had been executed, and it was seldom lacking in such tokens. The Regent Morton, accused of the murder of Darnley; the Duke of Montrose, and later his great enemy, the Duke of Argyle, were among the most distinguished of these victims; but there were many others.

The Church of St. Giles almost touched elbows, so to speak, with the prison. The central portion was set apart for religious services under the name of the 'Old Church,' the worshippers of those days having a strong aversion to the use of the name of a saint. They seemed to have no objection to attaching to their sacred edifice the designation of the temporary abode of sinners, for the southwest quarter was called the 'Tolbooth Church,' from its proximity to the prison. On the morning of the 11th of April, 1736, according to the account of Robert Chambers, Wilson and Robertson were conducted to the Tolbooth Church, to listen to their last sermon, their

execution having been planned for the following Wednesday. Very much as described in the novel, except that the incident took place almost instantly after they had seated themselves in the pew, instead of after the sermon as Scott says, Wilson seized three of the guards and shouted to Robertson to run. The latter tripped up the fourth soldier and quickly escaped, aided by the sympathetic church-goers, who contrived to block up the passages so that pursuit was impossible. Three days later, Wilson was executed in the Grassmarket. The sympathy of all Edinburgh was with him, for several reasons. First, his crime was only the robbery of a revenue officer, in reprisal for the seizure of his own goods on a charge of smuggling. In those days (and even now, it may be feared) the crime of cheating the Government out of its revenues was not considered an enormous one. If a poor smuggler happened to be caught, there was no reason why he should n't 'get even' with the officers if he had a good chance. At least, so Wilson argued, and many sympathized with his view. Second, the Scots were not yet entirely reconciled to the union, and the exhibition of too much authority at London was likely to be resented. Third, Wilson had acted the part of a generous friend and courageous man in sacrificing his own chances to secure the escape of Robertson.

Some stones were thrown at the captain of the City Guard, John Porteous, and that officer, beside himself with rage, snatched a gun from a soldier and, setting the example himself, commanded his party to fire. The result was the loss of six lives and the wounding of eleven persons, many of the victims being innocent spectators

who were watching the affair from neighbouring windows. For this offence Porteous was tried and convicted, his execution being set for the 8th of September. Before the prisoner could be executed, a pardon reached Edinburgh, signed by Queen Caroline, acting as Regent. Robert Chambers says that it came on the 2d of September, giving the mob five days for preparation instead of a single afternoon, as described by Scott. It is a matter of history that the 'mob' acted with remarkable moderation, harming no one except their intended victim. Ladies of the upper classes, travelling in their chairs to meet evening engagements, were quietly turned back. The shopkeeper in the West Bow, whose place was broken into for a coil of rope, found himself reimbursed with a guinea. The town guard was disarmed and the city gates closed without confusion, showing that cool heads were in the lead. The jail was stormed and, as the door would not yield, it was set on fire. When this finally became effective, the fire was extinguished. All the prisoners were set free except Porteous, who was taken to the Grassmarket and hanged on a post near the scene of his own crime.

The event caused great excitement, not only in Edinburgh, but in London. The House of Lords proposed a severe punishment, including the imprisonment of the Lord Provost, but finally compromised with a fine upon the city of £2000 for the benefit of Porteous's widow, thus throwing the punishment upon those who had nothing to do with the affair and could not have prevented it.

When the discreditable old Tolbooth was finally demolished, Scott was presented with the door and its

frame, which are now built into the outer walls of the mansion at Abbotsford and the keys of the prison are among the treasures of his museum. In 1816, he wrote to Terry, 'I expect to get some decorations from the old Tolbooth of Edinburgh, particularly the copestones of the doorway, or lintels, as we call them, and a *niche* or two — one very handsome, indeed! Better a niche *from* the Tolbooth than a niche *in* it, to which such building operations are apt to bring the projectors!'

The first part of the novel is a skilful blending of the history of the Porteous Mob, with the true story of an unfortunate girl and her noble sister, who lived in another part of Scotland. The author represents Effie Deans as having been incarcerated in the old Tolbooth and places her trial in one of the buildings of Parliament Close. The real Effie was imprisoned in the jail at Dumfries and her trial occurred in an upper room of a curious old building of that city, known as the Mid-Steeple, a structure, now over two centuries old, which stands in the middle of the High Street and gives a picturesque effect to that thoroughfare. On the south front, above a stairway which ascends across the face of the building, is a sculptured figure of St. Michael treading on a serpent, the arms of the burgh, and above this are the royal arms of Scotland, also carved in stone. The space in front is given a pleasant bit of colour by the display of flowers and vegetables, here offered for sale.

The story of Helen Walker, the original of Jeanie Deans, is well remembered in Dumfries. A stone or two may still be discovered, by those who care to search for the remnant of her little cottage, near the banks of the river Cluden. She lived to be seventy or eighty years

old, supporting herself by working stocking-feet and raising chickens, besides occasionally teaching a few children to read. In early life she had been left an orphan, charged with the support of a younger sister, named Isabella, or 'Tibby,' to whom she devoted herself with many evidences of genuine affection. It was a great shock to her, therefore, when she learned that the young girl had been accused of child-murder and that she herself would be called upon as the principal witness against her. Under the law, as her counsel explained, if she could testify that her sister had made the slightest preparation or had even confided to her an intimation on the subject, such a declaration would save her sister's life. The temptation to tell a plausible lie, which no one could dispute, was undeniably strong. But Helen was a woman of finer mould, and not even the purest sisterly love could induce her to violate her conscience. She swore to the truth and Isabella was condemned. As she left the court, the latter was heard to exclaim, 'Oh, Nelly! ye've been the cause of my death!'

The same moral courage which gave resolution to Helen Walker to stand for the truth, now impelled her to a remarkable exercise of the power of an indomitable will. The difficulties seemed insurmountable. There was no hope except in the royal pardon. There was no one to intercede with the King and London was many miles away. But Helen did not waste a moment. A petition was hastily drawn, setting forth the facts in the case, and on the very night of the conviction, the dauntless Scotch lassie set out on foot for London, clad in her simple country dress and tartan plaid, without letters of introduction or recommendation, with little money in her

purse, and scarcely a chance of success except a sublime faith in Providence and reliance upon her own stout heart.

There was one nobleman in London to whom the heart of any of his Scotch countrymen would instinctively turn in such an emergency. This was John, Duke of Argyle, who had stoutly resisted the efforts to inflict an undeserved punishment on the people of Edinburgh for their part in the Porteous affair. To him Helen Walker presented herself, after watching three days at his door, just as he was about to enter his carriage. Her unpretentious dress, her honest face, and the pathos of her story won the heart of the generous nobleman, who procured the pardon and forwarded it to Dumfries. Helen returned on foot as she had come, and had the satisfaction of witnessing the release of her sister. Isabella married the man who had wronged her and lived many years, always acknowledging in the most affectionate terms the high nobility of her sister's character.

Helen died in poverty and was buried in the picturesque churchyard of Kirkpatrick Irongray, northwest of Dumfries, where her grave might have been forgotten but for the generosity of Sir Walter and the interest of Mrs. Goldie, who told him the story. This good lady requested the novelist to write an inscription, saying that if he would do so, she would be able to raise the necessary funds for a monument. Scott, however, insisted upon supplying both the inscription and the stone. We made it our first care on the afternoon of our arrival in Dumfries to drive to the old Kirk where, in spite of the inconvenience of an unexpected shower, we photo-

graphed the memorial and afterwards stood under an umbrella copying the following inscription: —

This Stone was erected
By the author of Waverley
To the memory
of

HELEN WALKER

Who died in the year of God, 1791.
This humble individual
Practised in real life
The virtues
With which fiction has invested
The imaginary character of

JEANIE DEANS

Refusing the slightest departure
From veracity
Even to save the life of a sister,
She nevertheless shewed her
Kindness and fortitude
In rescuing her
From the severity of the law,
At the Expense of personal exertions
Which the times rendered as difficult
As the motive was laudable.

---

Respect the grave of poverty
When combined with love of truth
And dear affection.

One day during our stay in Edinburgh we hired a conveyance to take us to the suburban scenes of 'The Heart of Midlothian.' Our driver was recommended as 'one

of the best guides in Edinburgh,' and so he proved to be. In spite of orders to drive direct to the King's Park, he insisted upon going by way of High Street and the Canongate, when, every few rods it seemed, he would bring his horse to a walk, then turn in his seat until he faced us and point with his long whip to some window 'where the famous Adam Smith lived' or 'where Dugald Stewart had his rooms.' Perhaps he was only following the example of Sir Walter, of whom Lockhart said, 'No funeral hearse crept more leisurely than did his landau up the Canongate; and not a queer tottering gable but recalled to him some long-buried memory of splendour or bloodshed, which, by a few words, he set before his hearers in the reality of life.' All of this was interesting enough, or would have been, had I not wished to reach my objective point before sundown, but Jehu was like the burro I once rode in the Garden of the Gods in Colorado, which beast responded to the spur by two convulsive steps, then settled down to his previous pace, which neither coaxing nor threatening, caressing nor spurring, soft words nor sharp ones, would induce him to change for the space of more than a minute at a time. So with our 'best guide.' I finally concluded to let him have his own way, as I had been obliged to do with his obstinate relative, the burro, and so finally got through the Canongate after listening to a rehearsal of the entire catalogue of Edinburgh worthies for several centuries. When the King's Park was reached, after passing Holyrood Palace, the guide found himself 'out of bounds' and kindly permitted me to direct the further proceedings.

Here the city seems to come to a sudden end, and look-

ing toward the southwest we saw only a mass of steep cliffs backed by a rugged mountain. This was a favorite resort with Sir Walter, when a boy. In later years, the Radical Road, which winds around the edge of the Salisbury Crags in a broad pathway, was laid out at his suggestion, to give employment to idle men.

In writing 'The Heart of Midlothian,' Scott was therefore more at home than with any other of his novels. Muschat's Cairn and St. Anthony's Chapel, where Jeanie had her midnight interview with the betrayer of her sister, were familiar sights of the author's boyhood. On a dark night they would be lonely enough even now.

Near the park gate we passed some boulders known as Muschat's Cairn, but as they were carefully enclosed and surrounded by a well-kept plot of grass, they gave no suggestion of the weird and desecrated ground where evil spirits had power to make themselves visible to human eyes. The original cairn was made by passing travellers, each throwing a stone upon the spot, to express his detestation of the horrible murder committed in 1720 by Nicol Muchet or Muschat, who killed his wife under circumstances of great cruelty. In the ordinary course of improvements, the cairn was swept away, but the novel created a new interest in its story, which led to its restoration.

St. Anthony's Chapel, on the rugged hillside overlooking St. Margaret's Loch, gives more of the impression of Scott's tale. The scene on any moonlight night even now would be the same as it was on that night when Jeanie met George Robertson at the cairn and was followed by Ratcliffe and Sharpitlaw, guided by Madge Wildfire. The ruined chapel, where the jailer and the

ST. ANTHONY'S CHAPEL

lawyer succeeded only in capturing each other instead of the fugitive, is still as lonely and difficult of access as it was then, the only difference being that some of the walls have fallen. We drove as near to the base of the hill as it was possible to go. I then left the carriage and began the ascent, stopping a moment at St. Anthony's Well, where Madge Wildfire wanted to meet the ghost of the murdered Ailie Muschat to wash the blood out of her clothes 'by the beams of the bonny Lady Moon.' Arriving at the chapel after a hard climb, I was studying the composition of a picture when I was accosted by a policeman, who had toiled after me all the way up that steep incline. He informed me that I was welcome to photograph the ruins, but I must n't take any group pictures. As there was nobody in sight but the policeman and myself, and as I did not wish to make a 'group' of him, I wondered why he had taken so much trouble. Perhaps he felt the proud satisfaction of the hero, who, in the language of an admiring rustic friend, 'seen his duty and done it noble.'

The chapel of St. Anthony, of which now only a fragment remains, was once a Gothic structure, with a tower forty feet high, in which a light was kept for the guidance of mariners. A hermitage, of which scarcely a trace remains, was partly formed of one of the sheltering crags near by. The lofty site, commanding an extensive prospect of sea and sky was supposed to be favourable for pious meditations. The sight of the palace below was expected to make an impression in the minds of the monks of the 'striking contrast between the court, so frequently assaulted by an unprincipled rabble, and their own tranquil situation in which they

were gladly preparing for the regions of everlasting repose.' Although overlooking a populous city, the residents of the hermitage had all the 'advantages' of life in a wilderness, as secluded and peaceful as a Highland desert.

On the opposite side of the intervening valley we visited St. Leonard's Crags at the southwest edge of the King's Park. A neat cottage, with a little garden on the slope below, passes as the house of David Deans. Whether Scott had in mind this particular building is immaterial. It is in the exact locality described in the novel, and we thought it pleasant to stand on the side of the hill overlooking the same extensive sheep pasture, and the same crags and mountain beyond, that met the eyes of Jeanie Deans when she stood at the cottage door anxiously looking along the various tracks which led to their dwelling, 'to see if she could descry the nymph-like form of her sister.'

A house known as 'Dumbiedykes,' so called because in Scott's time it was used as a private school for the deaf and dumb, is not far distant. The novelist borrowed only the name, which he seems to have transferred to an old farm called Peffermill, in the vicinity of Liberton.

'Douce David Deans' is an original creation, the result of Scott's absorption of the descriptions of character in Patrick Walker's biographical accounts of the Covenanters. In acknowledging his indebtedness to this authority, Scott says, 'It is from such tracts as these, written in the sense, feeling, and spirit of the sect, and not from the sophisticated narratives of a later period, that the real character of the persecuted class is

to be gathered.' 'David' is just a touch of the same kind of which we have seen so much in 'Old Mortality.' His lecture to his daughters on the evil of dancing is taken from Patrick Walker's Life of Cameron: —

> Dance? — dance, said ye? I daur ye, limmers that ye are, to name sic' a word at my door-cheek! It's a dissolute, profane pastime, practiced by the Israelites only at their base and brutal worship of the Golden Calf at Bethel, and by the unhappy lass who danced off the head of John the Baptist, upon whilk chapter I will exercise this night for your further instruction, since ye need it sae muckle, nothing doubting that she has cause to rue the day, lang or this time, that e'er she suld hae shook a limb on sic' an errand. Better for her to hae been born a cripple, and carried frae door to door, like auld Bessie Bowie, begging bawbees, than to be a king's daughter, fiddling and flinging the gate she did. . . . And now, if I hear ye, quean lassies, sae muckle as name dancing, or think there's sic' a thing in this warld as flinging to fiddle's sounds and piper's springs, as sure as my father's spirit is with the just, ye shall be no more either charge or concern of mine!

What a treat it would be to hear Douce David express an opinion of the elaborate present-day performances of 'Salome'!

Madge Wildfire, or Murdockson, was drawn from a crazy woman, called Feckless Fannie, who travelled over Scotland and England at the head of a flock of sheep. They were remarkable animals, who recognized their names as bestowed by their mistress, and responded promptly to her commands. She slept in the fields in the midst of her flock, and one very polite old ram, named Charlie, always claimed the honour of assisting her to rise. He would push the others out of the way,

then bend down his head, and when Madge had taken a firm grasp upon his large horns, he would raise his head and gently lift his mistress to her feet. This and numerous other stories of Feckless Fannie were furnished the novelist by his indefatigable friend, Joseph Train.

The great popularity of 'The Heart of Midlothian' may be judged from a letter of Lady Louisa Stuart, who said, 'I am in a house where everybody is tearing it out of each other's hands and talking of nothing else,' and from Lockhart's testimony, that he had never seen such 'all-engrossing enthusiasm' in Edinburgh 'on the appearance of any other literary novelty.' Andrew Lang only voices the feeling of other Scotchmen when he declares that it is 'second to none' of the Waverley Novels and that 'no number of formal histories can convey nearly so full and true a picture of Scottish life about 1730–40 as 'The Heart of Midlothian.'

Lockhart, as usual, sets forth the true secret of the author's success and does it in a single paragraph. 'Never before,' he says, 'had he seized such really noble features of the national character as were canonized in the person of his homely heroine; no art had ever devised a happier running contrast than that of her and her sister, or interwoven a portraiture of lowly manners and simple virtues, with more graceful delineations of polished life or with bolder shadows of terror, guilt, crime, remorse, madness, and all the agony of passions.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR

Ralph Waldo Emerson, who frequently showed his familiarity with the Waverley Novels, regarded 'The Bride of Lammermoor' as Scott's highest achievement. He declared that it 'almost goes back to Æschylus for a counterpart, as a painting of Fate — leaving on every reader the impression of the highest and purest tragedy.' The dramatic close of the story is based upon a calamity which marred the private life of James Dalrymple, the first Lord Stair, a great lawyer, legal writer, and judge, who was the ancestor of a long line of distinguished advocates, judges, and public men.

This gentleman was born in Ayrshire in 1619. He was carefully educated, and when a young man lectured in the University of Glasgow on mathematics, logic, ethics, and politics. At twenty-nine he began the practice of law at Edinburgh, winning great fame in his profession, because of extensive legal attainments. His great work on 'The Institutions of the Law of Scotland' is still held in high esteem by Scottish lawyers, although the feudal law which it elucidated has become antiquated. It is considered, however, that something of its spirit still survives. He became a judge, was appointed President of the Court of Session, served as a member of the Scottish Parliament, and took a prominent part in various political and diplomatic undertakings. Unfortunately incurring the enmity of the Duke of York, he

lost his influence at court and was deprived of office. Fearing prosecution for treason, he retired to Holland, returning, however, a year later in the suite of William of Orange. He lived to the age of seventy-six, his latest years saddened by the bitter attacks of his enemies. This is the man whom Scott introduces as Sir William Ashton, though without meaning to impute to Lord Stair the tricky and mean-spirited qualities of the fictitious character.

James Dalrymple was married in 1644 to Margaret Ross, the heiress of a large estate in Galloway. She was a woman of great ability and strong character, who seems to have exerted a powerful influence in promoting her husband's prosperity and political ambition. She shared his fortunes, whether good or bad, for nearly half a century, always exerting an imperious will, which even he did not dare to contradict, but ever faithful in advancing his interests. Following her husband's downfall, when the number of his enemies had greatly increased and his life was in danger, Lady Stair was accused of attending conventicles and of harbouring 'silenced preachers' in her house. Others went farther and accused her of witchcraft, maintaining that the great prosperity of her family was attributable solely to the lady's partnership with His Satanic Majesty. Whatever may have been the slanders directed against her good name, the Lady Stair of history was clearly the prototype of Lady Ashton.

The lord and lady of real life had a daughter Janet, who was betrothed, without the consent of her parents, to Lord Rutherford. Lady Stair's will asserted itself in opposition, and without consideration of her daughter's

feelings, the mother proceeded to annul the engagement, notifying the lover that his fiancée had retracted her unlawful vow. After a stormy interview, in which Lord Rutherford argued his case with the determined mother in the presence of the younger woman, the latter, who had feebly remained silent and motionless, at last obeyed with sad reluctance her mother's command and gave back to her lover the half of a broken coin, which had been the symbol of their mutual pledge. In a burst of passion Lord Rutherford left the room and soon after went abroad never to return.

The marriage desired by Lady Stair now took place, the bridegroom being David Dunbar, the heir of an estate in Wigtownshire, the lady's native county. On the night of the wedding some tragic event took place which resulted in the death of Janet two weeks later. Either the bride stabbed the husband or the husband stabbed the bride. The family seem to have thrown a veil of secrecy over the whole affair and the exact truth was never positively known. According to one account, when the door of the chamber was opened, the young bridegroom lay upon the floor badly wounded, while the wife was found in a state of frenzy, screaming as the door opened, 'Tak' up your bonnie bridegroom.' Another story is that the mother, inspired by Satan, attempted the murder, the marriage having been contracted against her will, and that the bridegroom went crazy. A third rendition is that the disappointed lover concealed himself in the apartment and committed the crime.

Scott adopts the most plausible view, namely, that the young lady, forced to marry against her will, simply lost her reason and in a mad delirium assaulted her

husband. That young gentleman recovered from his wounds. Thirteen years later, he was killed by a fall from his horse, a catastrophe which the novelist transfers to the disappointed suitor.

The scenery of the drama which led to such a tragic event is placed by the author in the Lammermuir Hills, a stretch of mountainous country lying along the borders of Haddington and Berwick, in the southeastern corner of Scotland. At the extreme eastern limits of this elevated section, the land drops abruptly into the North Sea, forming a line of precipitous cliffs, rising three or four hundred feet above the ocean. To gain some idea of the character of the region, we drove as far as the motor-car could carry us and came to a stop at the end of the road on the northern edge of the village of Northfield. A long walk, leading at first through an open field in which cattle were grazing, then along a narrow path by a brook, where numerous sheep were pasturing, thence by a winding road to the summit of a hill, brought me at last to the lighthouse of St. Abbs Head. Vast masses of rocks rise directly out of the ocean to enormous heights and stretch along the coast as far as the eye can see. Except for the lighthouse, there was no sign of life save the sea-fowl, which flew wildly in every direction, screaming in one incessant chorus of shrill complaint. A lowering sky added to the weird loneliness of the scene. I was gone so long that my wife, who wisely remained in the car, began to feel certain that I had tumbled over the rocks into the sea, and busied herself for an hour in unpleasant thoughts of how she should manage to get my remains home. But after nearly two hours, the remains came walking back without even the

excitement of being chased by a wild bull. Thus do most of our worries melt away if we give them time enough.

Somewhere on this rugged shore was the castle of Wolf's Crag, the last remnant of the property of the Master of Ravenswood and the scene of Caleb Balderstone's wonderful expedients to maintain the honour of his house. Caleb, by the way, who would make a first-class performer in a farce comedy, and who served a useful purpose in relieving the strain of a sombre narrative, was not without a prototype in real life. His exploit in carrying off the roast goose and the brace of wild ducks from the kitchen of the cooper, to make a dinner for his master's guests, was based upon a story told to Scott by a nobleman of his acquaintance. A certain gentleman in reduced circumstances had a servant named John, whose resourcefulness was much like Caleb's. A party of four or five friends once sought to surprise this gentleman by unexpectedly presenting themselves for dinner, suspecting there would be no provision in the house for such an entertainment. But promptly as the village clock struck the hour for the noonday meal, John placed on the table 'a stately rump of boiled beef, with a proper accompaniment of greens, amply sufficient to dine the whole party.' He had simply appropriated the 'kail-pot' of a neighbour, leaving the latter and his friends to dine on bread and cheese, which, John said, was 'good enough for them.'

Caleb's trick of magniloquently referring to scores of imaginary servants and detailing the particulars of fictitious banquets, all to maintain the honour of the house, had a parallel in the antics of a Scotch innkeeper of the Border country, who, on the arrival of a person of impor-

tance, would call *Hostler No. 10* down from *Hayloft No. 15* to conduct the gentleman's horse to one of the best stalls in *Stable No. 20*, and do it in such an eloquent style as to convey the impression of accommodations on a scale of magnificent proportions.[1] Wolf's Crag, according to the novel, is between St. Abbs Head and the village of Eyemouth. There is no such castle on that part of the coast, but in the opposite direction, only a few miles from St. Abbs Head, on a high rock overlooking the sea, is Fast Castle, which answers very well to the description. This much Scott himself acknowledged, but in his usual cautious way, asserting that he never saw the castle except from the sea.[2] An interesting painting of Fast Castle, presented to Sir Walter by the artist, the Rev. John Thomson of Duddingston, adorns the drawing-room at Abbotsford.

Viewed from the sea, Fast Castle is more like the nest of some gigantic Roc or Condor, than a dwelling for human beings; being so completely allied in colour and rugged appearance with the huge cliffs, amongst which it seems to be jammed, that it is difficult to discover what is rock and what is building. To the land side the only access is by a rocky path of a very few feet wide, bordered on either hand by a tremendous precipice. This leads to the castle, a donjon tower of moderate size, surrounded by flanking walls, as usual, which, rising without interval and abruptly from the verge of the precipice must in ancient times have rendered the place nearly impregnable.[3]

[1] From Robert Chambers's *Illustrations of the Author of Waverley*.

[2] In a note to the introduction to the *Chronicles of the Canongate*, Scott says, 'I would particularly intimate the Kaim of Uric, on the eastern coast of Scotland, as having suggested an idea for the tower called Wolf's Crag, which the public more generally identified with the ancient tower of Fast Castle.'

[3] From *Provincial Antiquities of Scotland*.

Fast Castle gained some notoriety from the attempt, in 1600, of an infamous character, Logan of Restalrig, in conspiracy with the Earl of Gowrie and his brother, to kidnap King James VI, the intent being to imprison him there, and to collect their reward from Queen Elizabeth. Fortunately for James, the plot failed.

The original of Ravenswood Castle is uncertain. Constable, who published a volume of 'illustrations to the Waverley Novels' in 1821, two years after the appearance of 'The Bride of Lammermoor' included an engraving of Crichton Castle, with a quotation referring to Ravenswood: 'on the gorge of a pass or mountain glen, ascending from the fertile plains of East Lothian, there stood in former times an extensive castle, of which only the ruins are now visible.' Crichton is at the western extremity of the high country of which the Lammermuir Hills constitute the greatest portion. Scott's fondness for it is well known, as readers of 'Marmion' will remember. Others have supposed Wintoun House, a fine old mansion farther to the north, to have been the original. Scott could hardly have had this in mind, however, for he distinctly refers to the place as now in ruins. Bearing in mind that Scott paid little attention to geographical requirements, it seems probable that he really referred to the ruins of Crichton. This is further confirmed by the fact that the picture to which I have referred was painted by Alexander Nasmyth, who was a friend of Scott's and the father-in-law of the author's frequent correspondent, Daniel Terry. If Crichton Castle is Ravenswood, the Crichton Kirk may be considered as the place where the wedding of Lucy Ashton and Bucklaw took place. It is a curious-shaped building, with

square tower and walls, partly covered with ivy, standing in the midst of a well-kept churchyard.

The novel opens with the dramatic burial-scene of the father of the young Master of Ravenswood. The chapel where this took place may be supposed to be Coldingham Priory, the oldest nunnery in Scotland, a quaint little structure, partly in ruins, but partly used for religious worship. In the chapter on 'Marmion' I have already referred to this chapel as the place where the body of a nun was found immured in the walls.

The village of Eyemouth, a quaint old fishing settlement at the mouth of the river Eye, will serve as an 'original' of Wolf's Hope. On the links or sand knolls, north of here, were the quicksands called the 'Kelpie's Flow.' While in the village I made diligent inquiries, but could get no information except from one man, who thought that the sandy beach of Coldingham Bay might be the locality which Scott meant, but he had never heard of the quicksands, and said if any had ever existed in the vicinity they must have disappeared long since.

It will be remembered that the Kelpie's Flow was the culminating scene of the tragedy. The prophecies of Thomas the Rhymer, so Scott would have us believe, were always fulfilled, and one of them was hanging over the head of the Master of Ravenswood, to the great trepidation of the faithful Caleb. The lines were these: —

> When the last Laird of Ravenswood to
> Ravenswood shall ride,
> And woo a dead maiden to be his bride,
> He shall stable his steed in the Kelpie's flow
> And his name shall be lost for evermoe.

CRICHTON CASTLE

After the tragedy in the Castle, young Ravenswood rode out to meet the bride's brother, Colonel Ashton, to fight a duel on the sands of Wolf's Hope. In the agitated state of his mind, he neglected the precaution of keeping on the firm sands near the rocks, and took a shorter and more dangerous course. Horse and man disappeared in the deadly quicksands, and thus was the prophecy fulfilled. Only a large sable feather was found as a sign of the young man's dreadful fate. Old Caleb took it up, dried it, and put it in his bosom. Thus ended the tale which Lockhart considered 'the most pure and powerful of all the tragedies that Scott ever penned.'

## CHAPTER XVI

### A LEGEND OF MONTROSE

DALGETTY — Dugald Dalgetty; Ritt-master Dugald Dalgetty of Drumthwacket; learned graduate of the Mareschal College, Aberdeen; stalwart soldier; cavalier of fortune; lieutenant under that invincible monarch, the bulwark of the Protestant faith, the Lion of the North, the terror of Austria, Gustavus Adolphus; Captain Dalgetty; and finally Sir Dugald Dalgetty — stalks with egregious effrontery through the pages of this novel, from start to finish, dragging his good horse Gustavus along with him. He is a bore, — undeniably so. Yet we can laugh at his eccentricities in spite of their tediousness, especially when reading the novel a second time after the desire to know the outcome of the story has been satisfied. As an original character he stands by the side of Bailie Nicol Jarvie, although he does not arouse the same subtle feeling of delightful satisfaction. The Bailie is always welcome, but Dalgetty is everlastingly in the way. And yet we could not possibly get along without him. We can forgive his pedantry and overlook his interminable lectures on military strategy in view of the loyalty and courage with which he faces Argyle in the dungeon, compels that nobleman to furnish a means of escape and rescues Ranald of the Mist. Nor can we help admiring the very effrontery of the man, when he uses it to such excellent advantage in cajoling the Presbyterian chaplain, thereby causing

that worthy man to furnish the one thing needed to facilitate his safe retreat. The story might well have been called, as it is in the Italian and Portuguese versions, 'A Soldier of Fortune,' for Dalgetty, rather than Montrose, is the real hero. In this connection it is curious to note that, in so far as its chief incidents concern Montrose, the tale is not a legend, but history. The two important words of the title are both, therefore, slightly misleading.

The journey into the Highlands of the Marquis of Montrose, in disguise and attended by only two gentlemen, is a matter of history. It was in 1644, during the Civil War, when the forces of Charles I were being menaced by an army of twenty thousand men under the Scotch Covenanter, General Leslie. Montrose urged Charles to make a counter-demonstration in the North and to draw Leslie back to the defence of Scotland by uniting the Highlanders with a strong force of ten thousand Irish Catholics. At length, armed with extraordinary powers, as the representative of the King, he was permitted to set out with a small army of about one thousand men. These became dissatisfied, however, and most of them deserted. In despair Montrose now resolved upon the bold stroke which proved to be the beginning of his brilliant military record. Disguised as a groom and attended only by Sir William Rollo and Colonel Sibbald, he made his way to the Perthshire Highlands, where he was joined by Lord Kilpont, son of the Earl of Airth and Menteith, with about five hundred men. The Irish troops, after being in danger of complete extermination by the Marquis of Argyle, finally arrived, but mustered only twelve hundred men instead of ten thousand. They were ordered to march

to Blair Atholl, where Montrose met the Highland chiefs and sent out the call to arms. The 'fiery cross,' no doubt very much as described in 'The Lady of the Lake,' went out from house to house and from clan to clan, and Montrose soon had an army of three thousand men. He marched toward Perth, and at Tippermuir, four miles west of that city, defeated the Covenanters on the 1st day of September, 1644. Marching rapidly towards Aberdeen, he won another victory at the Bridge of Dee on the 12th of the same month.

With the swift movements which characterized his generalship, Montrose won many a battle. Meanwhile the Marquis of Argyle, whom most of the clans hated for his unscrupulous aggressions, was gathering a strong force on the shores of Loch Linnhe. In midwinter, with snow upon the ground, Montrose crossed the mountains with his army, a feat hitherto regarded as impossible, but quite within the compass of that leader's remarkable genius. He met Argyle at Inverlochy and defeated him with a loss of fifteen hundred men, his own losses being only one officer and three privates. Argyle's forces scattered in every direction and were pursued for many miles. The Marquis himself, regarding discretion as the better part of valour, turned over the command of his forces to his cousin and watched the battle from his ship — an act that was severely condemned as cowardice, even by his own friends. In extenuation it can only be said that Argyle, while an able politician and statesman, was never a soldier.

While Scott based his story upon these historical events, he departed from the facts in some of the less important details, to serve the purposes of his romance.

The most conspicuous of these variations is in the part played by Lord Kilpont, as the Earl of Menteith. According to the novel, the Earl is a young man who falls in love with Annot Lyle, a pretty little maiden living in the household of the McAulays and supposed to be a rescued waif of the hated and greatly feared tribe, known as the 'Children of the Mist.' Annot is also beloved by the half-crazy Highlander, Allan McAulay. Lord Menteith, so long as the girl's antecedents are supposed to be so lowly, can entertain no thought of marriage and so informs Allan. When it is discovered, however, that she is really the daughter of Sir Duncan Campbell, and the heiress of Ardenvohr, a family as honourable as his own, Menteith no longer hesitates, and as Annot has long reciprocated his affection, the marriage is easily arranged. Allan does not consent so readily, but hastily encounters the Earl and fiercely challenges him. Convinced that the man is insane, the Earl hesitates a moment, when Allan suddenly draws his dirk and with terrific force plunges it into the Earl's bosom. A steel corslet saves the latter's life, though a severe wound is inflicted, and in a few weeks he is well enough to be married and the ceremony takes place in Sir Duncan's castle. Allan meanwhile appears suddenly before the Marquis of Argyle at Inverary, throws a bloody dirk upon the table, makes a brief explanation, and disappears forever. The novel closes in the conventional way. The Earl of Menteith, adding his bride's large estate to his own, 'lived long, happy alike in public regard and in domestic affection, and died at a good old age.'

The Earl, Lord Kilpont, was not so fortunate. He was

suddenly stabbed by James Stewart of Ardvoirlich, a supposed friend with whom he was on terms of the closest intimacy. This event, which was immediately fatal, took place a few days after the battle of Tippermuir and not after Inverlochy. There was no question of jealous rivalry in love. Kilpont had been married about twelve years and left a family of several children. The most probable explanation is that Stewart, who had a streak of insanity owing to the frightful circumstances of his birth,[1] quarrelled with his friend at a time when he was heated with drink and killed him under some sudden mad impulse. He immediately deserted Montrose and was subsequently made a major in one of the regiments of Argyle, a fact which gave colour to the suspicion that he had sought Lord Kilpont's assistance in a conspiracy to assassinate Montrose, for which Argyle would have paid a rich reward, but upon meeting with an indignant refusal, struck his friend with a dirk as the readiest means of avoiding the betrayal of his plans.

Stewart, like McAulay, is described as 'uncommonly tall, strong, and active, with such power in the grasp of his hand as could force the blood from beneath the nails of the persons who contended with him in this feat of strength. His temper was moody, fierce, and irascible.' There was good reason for this savage disposition and for his implacable hostility toward the 'Children of the Mist,' his father and mother having been the victims of one of the most fiendish outrages which ever disgraced the history of the Highlanders.

The scenery of 'A Legend of Montrose' brings us back

[1] The story is related at length in the Introduction to *A Legend of Montrose.*

to the people and the country which Scott described with so much enthusiasm in 'The Lady of the Lake' and again in 'Waverley' and 'Rob Roy.' To catch something of the spirit of it we drove westward from Callander and paused for a short time at the beautiful Falls of Leny, where the river of that name forms the outlet of Loch Lubnaig and the head waters of the river Teith. Here we may suppose Lord Menteith and 'Anderson,' the disguised earl, to be passing on their way to the north when they fell in with the garrulous Captain Dalgetty. Darnlinvarich, where the clans gathered, is wholly fictitious, the real meeting having taken place near Blair Atholl. One of the incidents which happened there is, however, based upon fact.

An Englishman, Sir Miles Musgrave, it will be remembered, had made a wager with Angus McAulay which threatened to embarrass that gentleman. When on a visit to the house of the former, Angus had seen six solid silver candlesticks put on the table. The Englishman rallied Angus a little, knowing that the sight was a novelty to the Scotchman, and the latter promptly swore that he had more and better candlesticks in his own castle. A wager was immediately offered and accepted that the Scotch laird could not produce them, the amount being so large that its payment would have embarrassed either party, but more particularly the Scotchman. The Englishman appeared with a friend at Darnlinvarich, just at the time of the arrival of the Earl of Menteith and his party, and there was great anxiety over the apparently certain loss of the wager. But Allan, the brother of Angus, was equal to the emergency. Dinner was announced and the company marched in. A large

oaken table, spread with substantial joints of meat, was set for eight guests, and behind each chair stood a gigantic Highlander, in full native costume, holding in his right hand a drawn broadsword, the point turned downward, and in his left a blazing pine torch. Then Allan stepped forth, and pointing to the torch-bearers, said in a deep and stern voice: 'Behold, gentlemen cavaliers, the chandeliers of my brother's house, the ancient fashion of our ancient name; not one of these men knows any law but their Chief's command. Would you dare to compare to *them* in value the richest ore that ever was dug out of the mine? How say you, cavaliers? — is your wager won or lost?' 'Lost, lost,' said Musgrave, gaily; 'my own silver candlesticks are all melted and riding on horseback by this time, and I wish the fellows that enlisted were half as trusty as these.'

The meeting of the clans was interrupted by an unwelcome guest, Sir Duncan Campbell, who came with a message from Argyle. Captain Dalgetty was appointed to return with him, under a flag of truce, and together they journeyed to the Castle of Ardenvohr, the residence of Sir Duncan.

The ancient Celtic fortress here described is the ruined castle of Dunstaffnage, reached by a short drive north from Oban. Its origin is unknown. According to one tradition, it was founded by a Pictish monarch, contemporary with Julius Cæsar. In its present shape the building probably dates from about 1250. It fell into the hands of Robert Bruce in 1308. The castle is a heavy structure of stone, standing on a solid rock, and protected by the waters of Loch Linnhe on three sides. It was originally accessible only by a drawbridge. It is

LOCH LUBNAIG

about one hundred and forty feet long and one hundred feet wide. The walls are ten feet thick and sixty feet high.

This ancient castle is the place where the Scottish princes were once crowned. They sat on the same stone that was used at the recent coronation of King George V, and of a long line of his predecessors, — the famous Stone of Scone. This ancient relic was carried from Ireland to the Island of Iona, and thence to Dunstaffnage, where it remained many years. Kenneth MacAlpine, in the ninth century, removed it to the palace of Scone, near Perth, where it remained five centuries. It was finally seized by Edward I and carried to London, where it has remained for the last six centuries.

A knoll on the south of the castle curiously suggests the Drumsnab of the novel, which Dalgetty insisted should be fortified according to his own military ideas. The castle of Inverary, on the shore of Loch Fyne, has been replaced by a magnificent modern mansion, the seat of the present Duke of Argyle. The secret passage to the dungeon, under the old castle, through which the novelist supposes the Marquis to have visited his prisoners, was suggested by a similar arrangement in the castle of Naworth, to which I have previously referred.[1] A private stairway leads from the apartment of Lord William Howard to the dungeon, by which the experiment of Argyle might have been and doubtless was practised.

A sail of less than four hours, from Oban, north through the picturesque channels of Loch Linnhe, brought us to Fort William. From this point we walked about two miles to the battle-field of Inverlochy and the

[1] Pages 20 and 43.

ruins of the old castle of that name, which we found to be in a sadly neglected state, far different from its neighbour, Dunstaffnage. The four walls of the enclosure may still be seen, but everything is in a ruinous condition. An antiquated horse with large protruding hip-bones was grazing in what was once the moat, and before taking a picture I was about to ask a boy to chase him away. But on second thought I let him stay, because he harmonized so perfectly with the surroundings.

The courtyard is about one hundred feet square. The walls are nine feet thick and of varying height. Like Dunstaffnage the castle is so old that its early history is shrouded in mystery. Tradition ascribes its origin to the Comyns, near the end of the thirteenth century. The view in every direction is charming. Across the river Lochy, a small stream which joins the Caledonian Canal to the waters of Loch Linnhe, may be seen the town of Banavie, and in the distance the highlands of Inverness-shire. In the opposite direction we could barely see the peaks of Ben Nevis, peeping through the mists that hung over the mountains. To the north are the heights of Lochaber over which the Marquis of Montrose made his famous march of thirty miles by an unfrequented route, during a heavy fall of snow, and suddenly confronted his enemy in the night, when they supposed him to be far away in another part of the country.

I think this novel must have been inspired by Scott's admiration of the 'Great Marquis,' whose brief but brilliant campaign in the Highlands appealed to his imagination just as the longer career of Rob Roy had done. It took him back among the picturesque people whom he loved to describe, and amidst scenery where

he had roamed with never-failing delight. The one possession in the remarkable antiquarian collection at Abbotsford which Scott cherished more than any other — more even than Rob Roy's gun — was the sword of Montrose, presented to the Marquis by Charles I and formerly the property of the monarch's father, King James. Sir Walter thought a dialogue between this sword and Rob Roy's gun might be composed with good effect. It seems a pity he did not undertake it. The sword bears on both sides the royal arms of Great Britain. The blade is handsomely ornamented, the hilt is finished in open scrollwork of silver gilt, and the grip is bound with chains of silver, alternating with bands of gold.

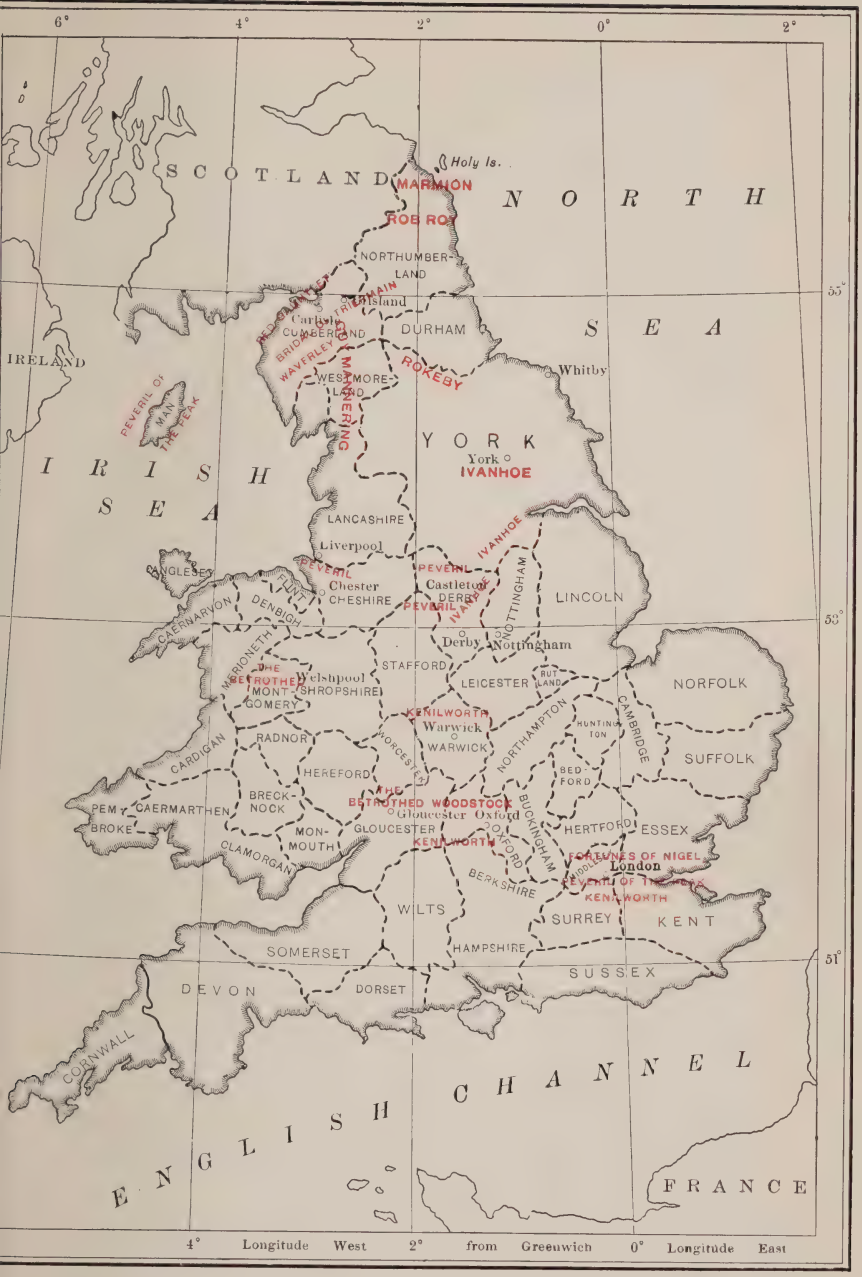
Scott did not follow the fortunes of his hero beyond the battle of Inverlochy, where he left him in triumph. Montrose continued his success until, on the 15th of August, 1645, he reached his climax in the decisive victory of Kilsyth. He was now the master of Scotland, but, unfortunately, fate deprived him of the fruits of his genius. Summoned to England to meet the exigencies which threatened the King, and unable to hold his Highlanders for an invasion of the South, he was attacked at Philiphaugh by Leslie, who easily overcame the small opposing force. Montrose escaped to the Highlands, but was never again able to organize an army. After spending the next few years abroad, he returned to Scotland in 1650, where, after failing again to summon the clans, he was betrayed and carried a prisoner to the Tolbooth in Edinburgh. On the 21st of May, when only thirty-eight years old, he was hanged in the Grassmarket and bravely met his death.

## CHAPTER XVII

### IVANHOE

From 'Bonnie Scotland' to 'Merrie England' was not a long step for Sir Walter, for he had already peeped into Yorkshire at Barnard Castle for his poem, 'Rokeby.' The principal scenes of 'Ivanhoe' are laid in the opposite end of the same county, between Sheffield and Doncaster. They extend, however, as far south as Ashby de la Zouch, and northward to the ancient city of York. As we rode through this populous country, humming with the industry of thousands of busy mills, its crowded cities showing street after street of substantial business houses, its more open spaces dotted with neat cottages surrounded by well-kept gardens, its streams crossed by bridges of stone and steel, its roads in excellent repair, and its entire aspect betokening the peace and prosperity of a great civilization, it was difficult to picture it in fancy as the great forest roamed by Robin Hood and his merry men; as a land in which King Richard and Wilfred of Ivanhoe performed their feats of chivalry and daring; as the region in which Cedric the Saxon still resented the intrusion of the Normans, and Front-de-Bœuf maintained a feudal castle concealing horrors too frightful to mention.

We succeeded, however, in finding a bit of the original forest, in identifying the ruins of two castles which figure prominently in the story, and several others which doubtless served as types of the prevailing Norman style


6°
4°
2°
0°
2°
SCOTLAND
Holy Is.
MARMION
NORTH
SEA
ROB ROY
NORTHUMBER-LAND
55°
Carlisle
CUMBERLAND
DURHAM
SEA
IRELAND
Whitby
WESTMORE-LAND
ROKEBY
PEVERIL OF THE PEAK
MANX
YORK
York
IVANHOE
IRISH
SEA
LANCASHIRE
Liverpool
Chester
CHESHIRE
Castleton
DERBY
LINCOLN
53°
ANGLESEY
CAERNARVON
DENBIGH
Derby
Nottingham
STAFFORD
Welshpool
SHROPSHIRE
LEICESTER
RUTLAND
NORFOLK
MONT-GOMERY
KENILWORTH
Warwick
WARWICK
NORTHAMPTON
HUNTING-TON
CAMBRIDGE
SUFFOLK
CARDIGAN
RADNOR
WORCESTER
HEREFORD
BED-FORD
PEMBROKE
CAERMARTHEN
BRECK-NOCK
Gloucester
Oxford
BUCKINGHAM-SHIRE
HERTFORD
ESSEX
MON-MOUTH
GLOUCESTER
OXFORD
FORTUNES OF NIGEL
London
GLAMORGAN
BERKSHIRE
WILTS
SURREY
KENT
SOMERSET
HAMPSHIRE
51°
SUSSEX
DEVON
DORSET
CORNWALL
CHANNEL
ENGLISH
FRANCE
4° Longitude West 2° from Greenwich 0° Longitude East

of architecture, besides other interesting places more remotely associated with the tale.

The town of Ashby de la Zouch, to which all the people of the story wend their way in the early chapters, is on the western edge of Leicestershire, about midway between Birmingham and Nottingham. The ancient castle derives its name from the fact that it was formerly owned by the Zouch family, who seem to have had possession until 1399. Scott was slightly in error in stating that at this time (1194) 'the castle and town of Ashby belonged to Roger de Quincey, Earl of Winchester,' who was then absent in the Holy Land. It is not inconceivable, however, that Prince John might have taken temporary possession, and, after all, that is the main point of the story.

The castle was a ruin in Scott's day, presenting an appearance very much the same as now. It suggested the scene of Prince John's banquet, but the novelist well knew that it was not the original castle which stood on the spot in 1194. Of the old castle we found only a single wall. The date of its foundation is uncertain, but it was probably built in the earlier part of the same century. Its successor, represented by the ruins now visible, was built in 1474, nearly three hundred years after the period of the novel. The reigning king was Edward IV, and one of his prime favourites was William, Lord Hastings, who was not only loaded with wealth by his sovereign, but given almost unlimited authority to enclose for private use whatever land he wished and to build wherever he pleased. Accordingly Hastings took possession of three thousand acres of land at Ashby and erected a huge castle, despoiling the

neighbouring castle of Belvoir of much lead, with which he covered his towers. The strong fortress and splendid castle thus erected stood intact for less than two centuries. During the Civil War it was besieged and captured by the Parliamentary Army, and in 1648 was deliberately made untenable by a Committee of the House of Commons, who had been appointed to determine what castles and other fortified places were to be retained and which ones were to be destroyed. Ashby, unfortunately, was condemned and huge sections of its walls and towers were undermined and pulled down.

The ruin consists of two large towers, connected by an underground passage, the great hall, the chapel, and the room of Mary Queen of Scots. The kitchen tower was of great strength, having walls in some places ten feet thick, and the remains of a huge kitchen fireplace may still be seen. The most imposing part of the ruin is the keep. This was a tower eighty feet high, fitted up in great magnificence as the Earl's apartment.

The great tournament was supposed to be held in a field a mile or two from the tower. After the tournament and the banquet in the castle which followed, Cedric the Saxon and his kinsman, Athelstane of Coningsburgh, with the Lady Rowena and their servants and retainers, set out for Rotherwood, the house of Cedric, presumably in the neighbourhood of, or possibly a fictitious substitute for, the present city of Rotherham. Their way led through a great forest, some remnants of which may still be seen. In King Richard's time the entire country between Ashby and Rotherham may have been thickly wooded. The famous Sherwood Forest occupied the western portion of Nottinghamshire, extending north

CASTLE OF ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH

and south about twenty-five miles, with a width varying from six to eight miles. In this extensive woodland, Robin Hood, with the jolly Friar Tuck and the minstrel Allan-a-Dale, and all the rest of the 'merry men,' hunted the king's deer, robbed the rich and bestowed charity upon the poor, worshipped the Virgin and pillaged the ecclesiastical establishments, supported themselves by means of their marvellous archery, played practical jokes and indulged in no end of fun, and lived a free, open, adventurous, brave, and generous life, in spite of their outlawry. Robin Hood was undoubtedly an historical character, who may have had an existence as early as the time of King Richard, but whose deeds have been so much enveloped in fiction and poetry that his real exploits cannot be determined. The legends that have been woven about him are like the tales of King Arthur — mythical but probably evolved from some hidden germ of truth. From 1377, when the oldest known mention of him was made in an edition of 'Piers the Ploughman,' down to the Elizabethan era, his popularity is evinced by the great volume of ballad poetry recording his performances.

That such a personage should have made a strong appeal to Sir Walter Scott was inevitable, and he seems to have woven the characteristic exploits of Robin Hood into the tale of 'Ivanhoe' with the same zest which he displayed in 'The Lady of the Lake,' 'Waverley,' 'Rob Roy,' and 'A Legend of Montrose,' where he so delighted to picture the Scottish Highlanders in their native country.

North of Mansfield, in Nottinghamshire, a beautiful part of the Forest of Sherwood may still be seen. For

many miles we drove through endless glades and avenues, the rugged oaks intertwining their branches over our heads, now and then forming those 'long sweeping vistas' which Scott describes so well, 'in the intricacy of which the eye delights to lose itself, while imagination considers them as the paths to yet wilder scenes of silvan solitude.' Here and there we could see herds of deer, coming boldly into view, knowing well that the arrows of Robin Hood's men are things of the past. All this region is now well cared for. There are splendid palaces with lakes, fountains, and flowers, transforming the old forest into a veritable fairy-land. Thoresby House with its beautiful park is the property of Earl Manvers; Clumber, on the border of the Carburton Lakes, is the stately seat of the Duke of Newcastle, and Welbeck Abbey, with gardens covering thirty-two acres, lakes of one hundred and fifty-nine acres, and a deer park of sixteen hundred and forty acres, is the magnificent domain of the Duke of Portland. All this section, which has been dubbed 'the Dukeries,' while preserving something of the appearance of a forest, can only present a striking contrast to the wild tangle of the woods, with their narrow and devious paths, through which the Saxon party passed on their way to Rotherwood.

Cedric, it will be remembered, soon overtook Isaac of York, the rich Jew, and his lovely daughter, Rebecca, who had been deserted by their cowardly escort. They were carrying, in a litter, 'a sick friend,' under which designation they concealed the identity of Ivanhoe. The whole party was later surprised and captured by some of the Norman nobles of Prince John's party,

THE BUCK-GATE. ENTRANCE TO THE DUKE OF
PORTLAND'S ESTATE, SHERWOOD FOREST

disguised as outlaws, by whom they were carried to Torquilstone, the castle of Front-de-Bœuf. This imaginary feudal edifice may be supposed to be in the vicinity of Harthill, a village nine miles south of Rotherham.

The dramatic incidents that occurred here are familiar to every one: how De Bracy made his futile attempt to woo the Lady Rowena, trusting to his handsome face and foppish clothes; how the Templar tried his blandishments upon Rebecca and was defeated by her courage in threatening to leap from the battlements, should he advance a single step; how Front-de-Bœuf sought to extort a fortune from Isaac the Jew by the most cruel torture; and how the villainy of all three was interrupted by a bugle blast, announcing an attack upon the castle by a band of outlaws, headed by the gallant Robin Hood, who was ably supported by the powerful battle-axe of the Black Knight and the wit of Wamba the Jester.

After the fall of the castle it will be remembered that the victors assembled under a huge oak to divide the spoils, and that Isaac of York and the rich Prior Aymer were compelled to sentence each other to the payment of a heavy ransom — a clever scheme well calculated to furnish not only amusement but substantial profit to the outlaws.

There are several large oaks of Sherwood Forest still in existence, any one of which might have been in the mind of Sir Walter. We found an excellent type, which was perhaps known to him, near Edwinstowe, northeast of Mansfield. It is called the 'Major Oak' and was a monarch of the forest in Robin Hood's time. It is said to be fourteen hundred years old. Its circumference, just

above the ground, is sixty feet, and there is room inside the hollow trunk for a round dozen of average-sized men. Unlike many other ancient oaks, its huge limbs are well preserved and remarkably symmetrical, its foliage forming a huge ellipsoid, seventy-five feet in length.

Although Torquilstone was imaginary, Sir Walter was not without types of the old Norman castles. He refers to Middleham as the seat of the brother of Prior Aymer, and the ruins of this castle may still be seen in the village of that name, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. The interior or keep is in the distinctive Norman style of architecture, but the outer walls belong to a later period. This castle was founded by Robert Fitz-Ralph or Ranulph, a nephew of King William Rufus, about 1190. Its walls are plain and massive, suggesting great strength, but no beauty. In the interior of the keep may be seen the remains of what was once a huge and magnificent banqueting-hall, with high arched windows on the side. For centuries Middleham was the residence of powerful barons and at times of royalty. In the fifteenth century it came into the possession of the famous Earl of Warwick, 'the Kingmaker,' and later of his infamous son-in-law, the Duke of Gloucester, afterward King Richard III. Edward, Prince of Wales, the only legitimate son of Richard, was born here. It was to secure the succession of this prince to the throne that Richard caused the murder of his two nephews to be perpetrated in the Tower of London.

Edward IV was a prisoner here, and made his escape as told by Shakespeare in 'King Henry VI.'[1] After the battle of Bosworth, Henry VII took possession of

[1] Part III, act IV, scene V.

THE AVENUE OF LIMES, SHERWOOD FOREST

Middleham. In the Civil Wars the forces of Cromwell destroyed the castle. From that time until 1884, when it came into possession of the present owner, the ruins have been a stone quarry for the neighbourhood and a large part of the castle has been carried away piecemeal. The enclosure became a dumping-ground for all kinds of trash and a free pig-pen and cow-stable. In 1884, it was cleaned out and is now in charge of a keeper. This famous castle, occupied as it was at times by men of all the ferocious and conscienceless qualities of Front-de-Bœuf, might well have served as a suggestion for Torquilstone.

Richmond Castle, lying a few miles north of Middleham, is of even greater antiquity and a far nobler specimen of the Norman architecture. It was founded in 1071 by Alan Rufus, to whom William the Conqueror granted the land of Richmondshire. Alan selected a rock on the bank of the river Swale and here he constructed a fortress that was well-nigh impregnable. The great 'keep' was built in 1146, and still stands proudly erect, in spite of its nearly eight hundred years' resistance to wind and weather as well as the storms of war, looking as if conscious of its power to stand the assaults of eight centuries more. We went to Richmond expecting to see a ruin; we were astonished to find, instead, a fine tower one hundred and eight feet high, fifty-four feet long, and forty-eight feet wide, used as an armoury by a modern regiment of soldiers. Its walls are of extraordinary thickness and the masonry looks as fresh and clean as that of many a building of half a century's duration.

Aside from the remarkable keep, the castle is really a ruin. Its walls, which originally enclosed a triangular

space of five acres, have crumbled away, but enough remains to identify various halls, chapels, dungeons, and underground passages.

The castle was seized by Richard Cœur-de-Lion and held by him and his successor King John for several years. For five centuries thereafter it passed from royalty to nobility and back again, time after time, as a reward for services or the spoils of war, until in 1674 it was granted by Charles II to the ancestor of the present Duke of Richmond.

Torquilstone is described as 'a fortress of no great size, consisting of a donjon, or large and high square tower, surrounded by buildings of inferior height, which were encircled by an inner courtyard.' It had 'towers upon the outward wall so as to flank it at every angle.' It would appear from this that the castle of Front-de-Bœuf might have been a miniature copy of Richmond Castle.

South of Richmond and about three miles from Middleham are the ruins of Jorvaulx Abbey, the seat of the Prior Aymer, 'a free and jovial priest, who loves the wine-cup and the bugle-horn better than bell and book.' The monks of Jorvaulx were famous for their love of feasting and the excellence of their wines. The Abbey church was originally an extensive structure, two hundred and seventy feet long, with transepts one hundred and thirteen feet wide. It was roughly treated and nearly demolished during the Reformation and neglected in the succeeding years until about a century ago, when the accumulated rubbish was cleared away. It now presents a picturesque appearance because of the ivy, moss, and shrubbery with which nature has soft-

ened the aspect of its rudely broken walls and the fragments of stone which once were heavy columns supporting a lofty nave.

Still farther south are the imposing ruins of Fountains Abbey, which must not be overlooked in any survey of the scenery of 'Ivanhoe,' for here was the alleged abode of that delightful character, the jolly Clerk of Copmanhurst, Friar Tuck, whose all-night carousal with King Richard in the forest 'Chapel of St. Dunstan' will be ever memorable as one of Scott's choicest bits of humour. This celebrated 'churchman' was the type of a class of so-called 'hedge-priests' who flourished in the period preceding the Reformation, when every great house maintained a confessor to say masses and grant absolution. The bands of outlaws, with equal superstition, felt the need of the same services, and maintained their own priests accordingly. Many of these performed their holy offices in ragged and dirty attire and with improper forms of ritual, for the benefit of thieves and murderers in out-of-the-way ruins and other hiding places, thereby incurring the wrath of the dignitaries of the Church. Not infrequently, no doubt, their uncanonical performances were no better than those of Friar Tuck.

Fountains Abbey is, next to Melrose, the most beautiful ruin of the kind in Great Britain — at least so far as I have been able to observe. In beauty of situation, it far surpasses Melrose. The latter is in the midst of a town with nothing to make a picturesque setting except its own churchyard and the garden of an adjoining estate. Fountains is reached by walking nearly a mile through the beautiful park of Studley Royal, first by the

side of a canal, bordered by trees of luxuriant foliage, through which, at intervals, are various 'peeps,' revealing carefully studied scenes, with temples, statuary, rustic bridges, towers, lakes, and woods; then by a path of more natural beauty, beside the little rivulet called the Skell, until the extensive ruins are reached. The foundation of Fountains Abbey has been traced to the year 1132, according to the narrative of a monk which was committed to writing in 1205. In the winter of 1132–33, a small company of Benedictine monks from St. Mary's Abbey at York, becoming dissatisfied with the laxity of discipline there, felt impelled to withdraw. They retired to a wild and uncultivated valley, covered with stones and briars, and better suited for wild beasts and reptiles than for humanity, and built a monastery beside the brook Skell. From this humble beginning, Fountains Abbey grew until the establishment became one of the richest in England, comprising sixty-four thousand acres of valuable lands and its buildings, covering an area of twelve acres, were among the most magnificent. In 1539, King Henry VIII confiscated the entire property, and rendered the monastery unfit for further use.

The ruins are more complete than those of any other similar structure, and give an excellent idea of the extent and arrangement of an important monastery. From the Chapel of the Nine Altars to the west doorway, which was the chief entrance, is a distance of three hundred and sixty-nine feet. It is an impressive architectural vista, the eye sweeping over the choir and transepts and down through the narrow nave, where the walls are supported by eleven obtuse pointed arches, springing

INTERIOR OF FOUNTAINS ABBEY

from massive columns, each sixteen feet in circumference and twenty-three feet high. The Chapel of the Nine Altars, considered to have been the most magnificent architectural feature of the structure, is divided into three parts by a series of very high pointed arches, supported by slender octagonal pillars scarcely two feet in diameter. A great east window, sixty feet high and twenty-three feet wide, completed the dignity and beauty of the chapel. From the exterior, the most striking feature is the tower, rising one hundred and sixty-eight feet high, with walls nearly thirty feet square, and projecting buttresses, adding an effect of great solidity.

The connection of Friar Tuck with this fine abbey is derived from the ancient ballad of 'Robin Hood and the Curtal Friar.' The outlaws were indulging in an exhibition of their wonderful archery when an unusually fine shot caused Robin Hood to exclaim: —

I would ride my horse an hundred miles
To finde one could match with thee.

This brought a laugh from Will Scarlet, who declared: —

There lives a curtal frier in Fountains Abby
Will beat both him and thee.

Robin Hood could not rest until he found the friar, walking by the waterside near the abbey. A conflict followed in which the friar threw Robin into the stream. After Robin had shot all his arrows at the friar without effect, —

They took their swords and steel bucklers
And fought with might and maine;

From ten oth' clock that day,
Till four ith' afternoon.

Then Robin blew three blasts of his horn and called half a hundred yeomen. The friar whistled with fist in his mouth and half a hundred ban-dogs answered. The end of the battle proved the stout friar well qualified to join the band of merry men.

> This curtal frier had kept Fountains Dale
> Seven long years or more;
> There was neither knight, lord, nor earl
> Could make him yield before.

An arched recess, of stone, well covered with foliage, by the side of the path along the river, marks the traditional site of this famous combat, and is known as 'Robin Hood's Well.' The following lines were written by Sir Walter while a guest at Studley Royal, and the manuscript is now in the possession of the Marquess of Ripon: —

> Beside this crystal font of old,
> Cooled his flushed brow an outlaw bold,
> His bow was slackened while he drank,
> His quiver rested on the bank,
> Giving brief pause of doubt and fear
> To feudal lords and forest deer.
>
> Long runs the tale, but village sires
> Still sing his feats by Christmas fires;
> And still old England's free-born blood
> Stirs at the name of Robin Hood.

After the fall of Torquilstone and the almost miraculous deliverance of all the prisoners, Cedric and his company journeyed to the Castle of Coningsburgh, the seat of Athelstane, to perform the funeral rites of that noble warrior, who had fallen a victim to the Templar's battle-axe. Athelstane interrupts the proceedings, somewhat

unnecessarily it would seem, by coming to life again. A visit to this castle takes us back to the valley of the Don, where the story began. Conisborough, as the village is now called, is situated about midway between Rotherham and Doncaster. There is nothing fanciful in Scott's description here. He introduced the castle because it interested him, and made it the seat of Athelstane for convenience. In a letter to his friend Morritt in 1811 Scott inquires, 'Do you know anything of a striking ancient castle . . . called Coningsburgh? . . . I once flew past it in a mail-coach when its round tower and flying buttresses had a most romantic effect in the morning dawn.'

It was characteristic of Scott, not only that every old ruined castle appealed to his imagination, but that his curiosity, once aroused, usually had to be satisfied by a personal inspection. It was so with Coningsburgh. He went to the village and spent two nights at the Sprotbrough Boathouse, a near-by inn, that he might have leisure to examine the ruins of the castle. The result of his study and the further reading of such antiquarian authorities as were available, convinced him that the round tower was an ancient Saxon castle. He found satisfaction in comparing it with the rude towers, or burghs, built by the Saxons or Northmen, of which one of the most striking examples is the Castle of Mousa[1] in the Shetland Islands. These were built of rough stone, without cement. They were roofless, and had small apartments constructed within the circular walls themselves. In this last respect Coningsburgh somewhat resembles these ancient burghs, and Scott conceived

[1] See Chapter xxi, 'The Pirate,' p. 300.

that the former was an evolution from the latter, and therefore Saxon. He says, 'the outer walls have probably been added by the Normans, but the inner keep bears token of very great antiquity.' He also says: 'When Cœur-de-Lion and his retinue approached this rude yet stately building, it was not, as at present, surrounded by external fortifications. The Saxon architect had exhausted his art in rendering the main keep defensible, and there was no other circumvallation than a rude barrier of palisades.'

The facts, as indicated by more recent investigation, seem to be that the Saxons selected the hill of hard limestone as a suitable place for a stronghold, excavated a ditch around it and erected some outworks. There is no doubt that Harold, the last of the Anglo-Saxon kings, either purchased or inherited the property, and there is mention of a certain 'lord of Coningesboro,' who possessed part of the domain as early as the year 1000 A.D.

William the Conqueror, shortly after his accession to the English throne, granted the estate to an adherent, William de Warrenne, who was created Earl of Surrey. A great-granddaughter of this earl married Hameline Plantagenet, a half-brother of Henry II, and he was one of the soldiers and faithful attendants of Richard I. It is this earl who is supposed to have built the tower, or keep, at least a century after his Norman predecessors had erected the outer walls of the castle. This, it will be noted, is exactly the reverse of Scott's supposition.

The Saxon founders selected a steep hill, or knoll, rising one hundred and seventy-five feet above the river — an ideal site for a fortress in those days.

CONINGSBURGH CASTLE

Earl Warren, who came into possession about 1068, found the place already well fortified. His son and grandson were the ones who, it is supposed, constructed the outer walls, with their various buildings for domestic purposes, comprising a hall, kitchen, chapel, etc. These cover a large area, but present no features of extraordinary interest. The inner tower, or keep, however, is one of the most remarkable structures in England. It is a huge cylindrical tower built of grey limestone on a base of solid natural rock. It formerly rose to a height of one hundred and twenty feet, and is now about ninety feet high. It is sixty-six feet in diameter at the base, and is supported by six massive buttresses, each fifteen and one half feet broad and extending outward about nine feet. The walls themselves are nearly fifteen feet in thickness. The only entrance is a door, twenty feet above the ground, originally reached by an outside stair connecting with a small drawbridge.

The rooms beneath the main floor were used for the storage of provisions and in the centre was a well, said to have been one hundred and five feet deep. There was then ample provision to resist a siege, lack of food and water being the only danger to be feared, inasmuch as the catapults and other engines of war of that period would be powerless against the massiveness of such a castle. The upper rooms are built within the walls and reached by narrow stairways. The main floor was probably used by the lord of the castle with his family and guests; the rooms above were occupied by the ladies of the household, and on the same floor was a small oratory or chapel, hexagonal in shape and about eight feet wide. The top floor contained the kitchen and the sleeping-

rooms of the garrison. The six buttresses projected above the level of the parapet, forming turrets, convenient for defence. These have now disappeared. The parapet floor is still accessible, and from it a fine view is obtained of the surrounding country.

The Castle of York, where Prince John is supposed to have feasted the nobles and leaders after the exciting scenes of Torquilstone, and where De Bracy announced to him that Richard was really in England, was the Norman fortress built by William the Conqueror in 1068, some portions of which are now incorporated in the building known as Clifford's Tower. A substantial rectangular structure stands between two ancient and ruined turrets, which lean outward, looking as though the stronger building were trying to usurp the hill on which they stand and push his feebler brethren out of the way. This castle was the scene in 1190 of a terrible massacre of the Jews. Two rich Jewish bankers, Joses and Benedict, attended the coronation of Richard I. In a general attack upon the Jews, Benedict was killed, but Joses got back to York. The house of Benedict in York was plundered and his wife and children murdered. Joses rallied the other Jews, who took refuge, with their property, in the castle. The governor ordered an assault, and the Jews, finding themselves unable to hold the citadel, set fire to the buildings, put to death all their relatives, and killed themselves, over five hundred lives being sacrificed. This incident throws some light upon the state of mind of the wealthy Isaac, who was a resident of the city of York.

'Ivanhoe' closes with the wedding of Wilfred and Rowena, 'celebrated in the most august of temples, the

noble minster of York.' The cathedral as it stands to-day is, indeed, noble. Perhaps it cannot properly be called the largest in England; Winchester Cathedral is longer, and Lincoln's towers are higher; but in the length of its choir and nave, the breadth of its transepts, the height of the great pointed arches supporting the roof, and the massive grandeur and dignity of the whole, whether viewed from the exterior or the interior, it is unsurpassed by any other cathedral in England and by few on the continent.

It was not in this magnificent temple, however, that the wedding took place, and perhaps if we could see a picture of the old Norman church which stood on the site in 1194, we might not think of it as 'a noble minster.' The church of that period was the structure built by the first Norman Archbishop of York, with the addition of the choir, erected a century later. In the crypt of the present cathedral some bits of the walls of these early buildings are still preserved. They replaced the first stone church, built about 633, which had superseded the original wooden church, built by Eadwine, King of Northumbria, then the most powerful monarch in England. The minster was, therefore, more than five centuries old even in the period of 'Ivanhoe.'

Of the characters in the novel, King Richard and his brother John were of course historical. Cedric and Athelstane were types of the Saxon nobles who still resented the intrusion of the Normans. Front-de-Bœuf represents a class of Norman noblemen who did not hesitate at any deed of villainy to accomplish their selfish purposes. Brian de Bois-Guilbert typifies the chivalry which professed great zeal for the Christian

religion, but used it as a cloak to cover motives of vengeance or other base purposes. Prior Aymer stands for the wealthy churchman and Isaac of York for the Jewish banker, upon whom all classes, kings, barons, and churchmen, were obliged to depend for the accomplishment of their various plans. Robin Hood, Friar Tuck, and the men in Lincoln Green were borrowed from the ballad poetry of the Middle Ages. All of these were introduced to perfect the picture of the conditions of social and political life in the reign of King Richard.

One character only found a place in the novel for another reason. The story of Rebecca reveals an interesting incident in the life of Washington Irving. When the American author visited Sir Walter at Abbotsford a feeling of mutual respect and admiration quickly sprang up between them and developed into a friendly intimacy. In the course of their conversations, Irving told Sir Walter something of the character of Rebecca Gratz, a young woman of Jewish family, living in the city of Philadelphia. One of this lady's brothers was a warm personal friend of Irving's, who was always a welcome guest at their home. One of Rebecca's dearest friends was Matilda Hoffman, Irving's first and only love. This estimable young woman died at the early age of eighteen, tenderly nursed to the end by her friend Rebecca, in whose arms she expired.

Rebecca Gratz is described as a very beautiful girl. 'Her eyes were of exquisite shape, large, black, and lustrous; her figure was graceful and her carriage was marked by a quiet dignity, — attractions which were heightened by elegant and winning manners. Gentle, benevolent, with instinctive refinement and innate

purity, she inspired affection among all who met her.'[1] Although a Jewess, Rebecca Gratz found many companions among the Christians by whom she was held in high esteem. She was interested in all kinds of benevolent work, founded an orphan asylum and a mission Sabbath-School for Hebrew children, and contributed to many charities.

A Christian gentleman of wealth and high social position fell in love with her and his feelings were reciprocated. But Rebecca conceived that duty demanded loyalty to her religion, and her lofty conscientiousness and remarkable moral courage enabled her to maintain her resolution. She refused to marry, in spite of the pain to herself and the bitter disappointment to her lover which the self-denial involved. Her life was devoted to 'a long chain of golden deeds,' until the end came at the good old age of eighty-eight.

Such a story could not fail to capture the sympathetic heart of Sir Walter, and as usual when anything appealed strongly to him, he wove it into a novel at the earliest opportunity, later writing to Irving, 'How do you like your Rebecca? Does the picture I have painted compare well with the pattern given?'

'Ivanhoe' marks the high-tide of Scott's literary success. The book instantly caught the attention of thousands to whom the Scottish romances had not appealed. It sold better than its predecessors, and from the day of its publication has been easily the most popular of the Waverley Novels. Lockhart, who, in common with most Scotchmen, could not help prefer-

[1] From an article by Gratz van Rensselaer, in the *Century Magazine*, September, 1882.

ring the tales of his native land and thought 'Waverley,' 'Guy Mannering,' and 'The Heart of Midlothian' superior as 'works of genius,' nevertheless gave 'Ivanhoe' the first place among all Scott's writings, whether in prose or verse, as a 'work of art.' Its historical value is perhaps greater than that of any of the others, and certainly no other author has ever given a picture, so graphic and yet so comprehensible, of 'merrie England' in the days of chivalry.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE MONASTERY

Scott had some strange ways of seeking relaxation from the strain of his work. On Christmas Day, 1814, he wrote Constable that he was 'setting out for Abbotsford to refresh the machine.' During the year he had written his first great novel, 'Waverley'; one of his longer poems, 'The Lord of the Isles'; nearly the whole of his 'Life of Swift'; two essays for an encyclopædia; a two-volume family memoir for a friend; and kept up a voluminous personal correspondence, — an amount of industry which is best described by Dominie Sampson's word, *prodigious*. Surely the 'machine' needed 'refreshment,' and it consisted in producing, in six weeks' time, another great novel, 'Guy Mannering'! In the same way, while dictating 'Ivanhoe,' in spite of severe bodily pain which prevented the use of his pen, he sought refreshment by starting another novel, 'The Monastery.' 'It was a relief,' he said, 'to interlay the scenery most familiar to me with the strange world for which I had to draw so much on imagination.'

'The Monastery' was the first of Scott's novels in which the scenery is confined to the immediate vicinity of his own home. It is all within walking distance of Abbotsford and much of it had been familiar to the author from childhood. Melrose, or Kennaquhair, is only about two miles away. This little village is as ancient as the abbey from which it takes its name, and

that splendid ruin dates from 1136, when the pious Scottish king, known as St. David, founded the monastery and granted extensive lands to the Cistercian Order of Monks for its maintenance. The village has followed the fortunes of the abbey — prospering when the monks prospered, and suffering the blight of war whenever the English kings descended upon it. Its present prosperity, so far as it has any, is the gift of Sir Walter Scott. Hawthorne, who rambled through the country in 1856, noted in his journal that 'Scotland — cold, cloudy, barren little bit of earth that it is — owes all the interest that the world feels in it to him.' I cannot endorse this view of Scotland, for it left quite the opposite impression upon my mind, but the last part of the remark is certainly true of Melrose. It bears about the same relation to Scotland that Stratford does to England. Thousands go there every year to see the work of art, glorious even in ruins, which represents the highest development of the Gothic architecture and to marvel at the rich carvings in stone which, after the lapse of nearly six hundred years, still remain as a monument to the patience, skill, and devotion of the monks of St. Mary's. But they go because the great Wizard of the North has thrown the glamour of his genius over the whole of the Border country, of which Melrose is the natural centre. And when they arrive, they find the abbey interpreted in the words of 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel,' which the custodians of the ruin, for fourscore years, have never tired of quoting.

In the novel, no attempt is made to describe the beauty of the ruin. The poem had already done that to perfection. But the monks spring into life again, the

venerable ruin is transformed into a church, the monastic buildings resume their former shape, and the palace of their ruler is refurnished in all its original magnificence. A fire of glowing logs gives warmth to the apartments. An oaken stand, with a roasted capon and 'a goodly stoup of Bourdeaux of excellent flavour,' suggests the truth of the old rhyme: —

> The monks of Melrose made fat kail
> On Fridays when they fasted,
> Nor wanted they gude beef and ale
> So lang's their neighbours' lasted.

In a richly carved chair before the fire sits a portly abbot, with round face, rosy cheeks, and good-natured, laughing eyes, the product of a long life of good feeding and indolent ease. By his side stands the sub-prior, a cadaverous, sharp-faced little man, with piercing grey eyes bespeaking a high order of intellect, his emaciated features testifying to rigid fastings and relentless self-abasement. The abuse of the monastic privileges, common enough at the time, is thus contrasted with the conscientious observance of all the rules of the order. In and out of the cloisters, the refectory, and the palace, monks in black gowns and white scapularies are continually passing. The old ruin has been restored by the genius of the novelist to the life and activity of the sixteenth century.

The earliest date referred to in the story is 1547, the year of the battle of Pinkie, when the Scottish forces met with a disaster exceeded only by Flodden Field. In this battle Simon Glendinning, a soldier fighting for the 'Halidome' of St. Mary's, met his death. His son Halbert was then nine or ten years old. The story comes

to a close when he is nineteen, which would be 1557. The hostility of Henry VIII had caused great anxiety to the abbots of Melrose long before this time and the persecution reached a climax in 1545. Sir Ralph Ewers and Sir Brian Latoun systematically ravaged the Scottish Border, burning hundreds of towns, castles, and churches, slaughtering and imprisoning the people by the thousands and driving off their cattle and horses. In the course of their raids, they reached Melrose with a force of five thousand men and vented their spite on the beautiful old abbey. The Scots took prompt vengeance. They quickly raised an army, and under the leadership of Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, met the English and defeated them with heavy losses. Both Ewers and Latoun were among the slain, and the monks of Melrose buried them in the abbey with great satisfaction. 'The Monastery' does not refer to this event, but its graphic picture of the unsettled state of the country and the consequent anxiety of the monks constitutes its chief value.

North of the abbey and across the Tweed is a green hillside, at the base of which is a weir or dam. This is the place where the sacristan of St. Mary's was pitched out of his saddle into the stream by the 'White Lady of Avenel,' who dipped him in the water two or three times to make sure that 'every part of him had its share of wetting.'

The old bridge, which the sacristan was prevented from crossing by the perversity of old Peter, the bridge-tender, was about a mile and a half up the stream. Such a bridge once existed, though now there are no traces visible. Scott used to see the foundations occa-

sionally when drifting down the river at night in pursuit of one of his favourite pastimes, spearing salmon by torchlight. There were three towers in the water. A keeper lived in the middle one and controlled the traffic by raising or lowering the draws at his pleasure. Those who refused to pay his price, or whom he did not wish to accommodate, might ford the stream, but at some stages of the water this was a perilous operation.

The river Allan flows into the Tweed near the site of this bridge. It is a little mountain brook that flows, in serpentine course, through the valley of Glendearg. A mile or so up the rivulet there is a picturesque and shady glen called Fairy Dean. After a flood, little pieces of curious stones, in fantastic shapes, are often found, the play of the waters having transformed the fragments of rock into fairy cups and saucers, guns, boats, cradles, or whatever a childish imagination might suggest. This was the abode of the fairies where the little elfin folk held their nightly carnivals, and who knows but Queen Titania herself might have held her moonlight revels upon this very spot? At any rate, the neighbouring people, for centuries, by common consent, recognized the feudal rights of the fairy race to this little dell, and left them undisturbed. It must have been the abode of the White Lady, and no doubt stood in the author's mind for the secluded glen which he calls, in Celtic, *Corrie nan Shian*, meaning 'Hollow of the Fairies,' where Halbert Glendinning found the huge rock, the wild holly tree, and the spring beneath its branches. Here, doubtless, for no more appropriate spot can be found, Halbert summoned the mystic maiden with the words: —

Thrice to the holly brake —
Thrice to the well: —
I bid thee awake,
White Maid of Avenel!

Noon gleams in the Lake —
Noon glows on the Fell —
Wake thee, O wake,
White Maid of Avenel!

At the head of the glen there are three ruined peel-houses or Border towers, known as Hillslap, Colmslie, and Langshaw. The first of these may fairly stand for the original of Glendearg, the home of the Glendinnings. This old tower has a sculptured date on the lintel of the entrance which seems to indicate that it was built in 1585 — a little too late for the story, to be sure, but trifles like that never worried Sir Walter. He wanted to place the Widow Glendinning and her two children in a tower suited to the ancient family connexions of her husband who might have been able to defend his secluded retreat against all comers for many years, had not the necessities of the time required his service in the wars for the defence of his country. Hillslap offered an excellent type of such a Border fortalice, and its situation at the head of the glen, well protected by the surrounding mountains and isolated by its remoteness from the ordinary lines of travel, made it suitable for the purposes of the tale.

Referring to the castle of Julian Avenel, Scott, in a footnote, remarks that it is vain to search near Melrose for any such castle, but adds that in Yetholm Loch, a small sheet of water southeast of Kelso, there is a small castle on an island, connected with the mainland by a

causeway, but it is much smaller than Avenel. Of course we must take the author's word for this, and yet, whether he did it with conscious purpose or not, he succeeded in putting into his description some features which irresistibly suggest a castle only seven miles from Melrose, the tower of Smailholm, associated with the dearest memories of his childhood.

Smailholm is one of the most perfect examples of the old feudal keeps to be found in Scotland. A very small pool lies on one side of the tower, but it is suggestive of the loch which once surrounded the entire castle, making it a retreat of great security. 'The surprise of the spectator was chiefly excited by finding a piece of water situated in that high and mountainous region, and the landscape around had features which might rather be termed wild, than either romantic or sublime.' It was a surprise to me to find even a small pool of water in such a locality, and I cannot help thinking that at least some recollections of the peculiar situation of Smailholm may have been in the author's mind when he wrote this description.

Scott has himself mentioned a prototype of the vulgar, brutal, and licentious Julian Avenel in the person of the Laird of Black Ormiston, a friend and confidant of Bothwell and one of the agents in the murder of Darnley.

The concluding scene of the novel represents a sorrowful procession of monks, in long black gowns and cowls, marching solemnly to the market-place of the town, where they formed a circle around 'an ancient cross of curious workmanship, the gift of some former monarch of Scotland.' This old Mercat Cross still stands

in the centre of the market-place of Melrose. It is about twenty feet high and is surmounted by the figure of the unicorn and the arms of Scotland. It requires a vivid imagination to identify the unicorn, however, the ravages of time giving it more the aspect of a walrus, rampant.

'The Monastery,' following so soon after Scott's greatest success, suffers severely by comparison with 'Ivanhoe,' and, perhaps for this reason, was considered something of a failure. The cause, generally assigned by the critics, was twofold, or rather, may be attributed to two characters, which did not appeal to the public as Scott had expected. One of these was the 'White Lady of Avenel' and the other, Sir Piercie Shafton.

Scott had always manifested a fondness for ghosts, goblins, witches, and the supernatural. The goblin-page made a nuisance of himself in 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel' and came near spoiling the poem; Marmion had to fight a phantom knight, and so did Bertram Risingham, but in both cases a rational explanation dispelled the mystery; the Baron of Triermain visited a phantom castle in the Valley of St. John; Bruce landed on the shores of Carrick, guided by a weird supernatural light; Fergus MacIvor was dismayed by the Bodach Glas, a cheerful sort of family ghost which always appeared when disaster was impending; the guest of the Antiquary was compelled to sleep in a haunted chamber; a mysterious fountain had a fatal influence upon the life of the Bride of Lammermoor; and so throughout the pages of Scott's poems and novels we find these strange incidents and phantom appearances. The real orthodox ghost only peeps in at you occasionally and quickly vanishes.

Although you may be frightened a little, you delight, nevertheless, in the mystery. But there is something too substantial about a female ghost who climbs up behind a man on horseback, guides him into a stream of deep water, and ducks him three times, meanwhile reciting long stanzas of poetry. And when the same ghost appears again and again, as though the whole plot depended upon her personal exertions, the constant exposure to the limelight causes the illusion to melt away. This, I fancy, is the reason the Maid of Avenel failed to appeal to Scott's readers.

Sir Piercie Shafton, the Euphuist, seems in like manner to have been overdone. A suggestion of the foppery and absurdities of the coxcombs of Queen Elizabeth's court might have been interesting, but Sir Piercie remains on the stage too long and becomes a bore. The pedantic Baron of Bradwardine in 'Waverley' is a bore, but we like him. The garrulous Dalgetty is tiresome, but we could not do without him. Sir Piercie, on the contrary, has no redeeming traits.

Aside from the failure of these two characters to please the public, the novel lacks the interest that attaches to all its predecessors. There is no Dandie Dinmont, nor Meg Merrilies, nor Dominie Sampson; no Jonathan Oldbuck nor Edie Ochiltree; no historical personage of interest like Rob Roy or King Richard; no Jeanie Deans; no Flora MacIvor; no Die Vernon; no Rebecca.

On the other hand, it has some fine pictures of the sturdy Scotch character, it gives a glimpse of monastic life in the sixteenth century, and has an historical value in its presentation of the conflict of cross-currents of

thought and feeling, as they affected the people who lived amid the furious contentions of the Reformation. Father Eustace is a fine type of the able, intelligent, and devoted Catholic priest, and Henry Warden of the brave, unflinching, determined apostle of the reformed doctrines.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE ABBOT

Scott was quick to realize the mistake in 'The Monastery,' and promptly redeemed his popularity by the bold stroke of writing a sequel. The White Maiden was banished along with Sir Piercie, and in their place came a train of new characters, well calculated to win the sympathetic approval of the public. Mary Queen of Scots was the chief of these, and the novelist's skilful portrayal of her character made a success of 'The Abbot.' Roland Græme, who proved to be one of the best of Scott's heroes, and Catherine Seyton, a young woman of charming vivacity, added not a little to the popularity of the novel.

The scenery, at first, remains the same. The story opens at the Castle of Avenel, of which Sir Halbert Glendinning is now the knight and Mary Avenel the lady. Henry Warden is established there as chaplain. The monks are still permitted to linger in the cloisters of St. Mary's, and among them is Edward Glendinning, known as Father Ambrose, who, later, becomes the abbot.

The beautiful abbey is pictured at the beginning of its decay. The niches have been stripped of their sculptured images, on the inside as well as the outside of the building. The tombs of warriors and of princes have been demolished. The church is strewn with confused heaps of broken stone, the remnants of beautifully

carved statues of saints and angels, with lances and swords torn from above the tombs of famous knights of earlier days, and sacred relics brought by pious pilgrims. The disheartened monks are seen conducting their ceremonials in the midst of all the rubbish, scarcely daring to clear it away. In keeping with this picture of decay and ruin is the vivid presentation of the invasion of the sacred abbey by the irreverent mob of masqueraders in grotesque costumes, led by 'the venerable Father Howleglas, the learned Monk of Misrule and the Right Reverend Abbot of Unreason.'

The tale now leads to Edinburgh, where young Roland Græme is struck with surprise as he comes, for the first time, into the Canongate. 'The extreme height of the houses, and the variety of Gothic gables, and battlements, and balconies' are still surprising. Græme gets involved in a street scrimmage, common enough in the Edinburgh of those days, and, without knowing it, renders service to Lord Seyton, one of the most faithful adherents of Queen Mary. A few minutes later he catches sight of Catherine Seyton as that pretty damsel is about to 'dive under one of the arched passages which afforded an outlet to the Canongate from the houses beneath.' Many of these arched passages may still be seen in the Canongate. The house of Lord Seyton into which Roland followed the maiden was about opposite Queensbury House, near the eastern end of the street.

Holyrood Palace comes into the story as the place where Roland was presented to the Regent Murray, an introduction into which Scott is believed to have woven some recollections of his own presentation to the Duke

of Wellington. Although the palace has stood for many centuries and has been the abode of many kings, its real interest centres about the fortunes of Mary Queen of Scots. Visitors are shown the audience chamber in which the Queen received John Knox, and found that the great Reformer, unlike other men, was proof against the loveliness of her countenance, the charm of her manner, and the softness of her speech. Knox found, too, that Mary was proof against the bitterness of his arraignment and the violence of his denunciation. Opening out of the audience chamber is Queen Mary's bedroom, where a bed, said to be Mary's own, is carefully preserved, its dingy and tattered hangings conveying little suggestion of the former richness of the crimson damask, with its fringe and tassels of green. A narrow door leads to a small dressing-closet, and another to the supper-room, where Mary sat with David Rizzio and other friends on the fatal night of February 13, 1565. Darnley, in a state of intoxication, burst into the room with a party of brutal conspirators, put his arms around Mary in seeming endearment, while the others dragged Rizzio into the audience chamber and stabbed him to death with their daggers.

The introduction of Loch Leven Castle gives a new scene to the novel and one of great beauty and interest. It was partly Scott's association with the Blair Adam Club that led to the use of this scene and the historical incident associated with it. A visit of Scott and his lifelong friends, William Clerk and Adam Ferguson, to the Right Honourable William Adam, in 1816, led to the formation of the Blair Adam Club, at the meetings of which Scott was a constant attendant for fifteen years.

Mr. Adam, who held the distinguished office of Lord Chief Commissioner of the Jury Court in Scotland, was, says Lockhart, 'the only man I ever knew that rivalled Sir Walter Scott in uniform graciousness of *bonhomie* and gentleness of humour.' In a book privately printed for the benefit of his own family and friends, the judge says: —

> The Castle of Loch Leven is seen at every turn from the northern side of Blair Adam. This castle, renowned and attractive above all others in my neighbourhood, became an object of much increased attention and a theme of constant conversation, after the author of 'Waverley' had, by his inimitable power of delineating character, by his creative poetic fancy in representing scenes of varied interest, and by the splendour of his romantic descriptions, infused a more diversified and a deeper tone of feeling into the history of Queen Mary's captivity and escape.

Many little allusions to localities on the estate of Blair Adam and references to the virtues and manners of its occupants, were woven into the story, which, while they escape the attention of the casual reader, did not fail to please the genial owner.

The castle stands on an island in Loch Leven, a pretty sheet of water, about three or four miles long, on the western border of which lies the town of Kinross. Two sturdy fishermen rowed us out to the island where we found the ruin of a square building. The tower is in good repair, but the remaining walls are quite ruinous. In one corner the room where Queen Mary was imprisoned was pointed out by the guides. It is very small, but has windows overlooking the lake, and there is room on the island for a pleasant garden. Except for

the loss of her liberty, Queen Mary might have found the castle a pleasant abode.

Loch Leven Castle was the property of Sir William Douglas, whose wife was the mother of the Earl of Murray, the illegitimate son of James V. The Lady Douglas could be supposed to have little sympathy for the legitimate daughter of the king to whom she pretended to have been married. In placing Mary in the hands of such a custodian, the lords who opposed her felt reasonably secure.

Scott gives a wonderfully dramatic picture of the visit of Lord Lindsay, Lord Ruthven, and Sir Robert Melville to the castle, and the method by which they extorted Mary's signature to deeds abdicating the throne in favour of her infant son and creating the Earl of Murray regent, and although the scene is purely fictitious, the facts of history are not distorted. Roland Græme is represented as unsheathing his sword and discovering a hidden parchment rolled around the blade. It proved to be a secret message from Lord Seyton, advising Mary to yield to the necessity of the situation. The incident is based upon the fact that Sir Robert Melville was sent to accompany the ruffianly Lindsay, and his no less harsh associate Ruthven, to prevent violence to the Queen, and to carry, concealed in the scabbard of his sword, a message from her friends advising submission and carrying the assurance that deeds signed under such compulsion would not be legally binding when she regained her liberty.

The escape of the Queen is told in substantial accordance with the facts, though with a variation of details which the license of the novelist would easily permit.

George Douglas, a younger brother of the lord of Loch Leven, was much impressed by the beauty of the Queen, and captivated by her pleasant manners and fair promises. He devised a plan of escape, but this was discovered and George was expelled from the castle by his brother. Another attempt was more successful. An inmate of the castle, called 'the Little Douglas,' had also felt a sympathy for the Queen. He was a lad of seventeen or eighteen and really played the part which Scott assigned to Roland Græme. He stole the keys and set the prisoner at liberty in the night. Placing her in a boat, he paused long enough to lock the iron gates of the tower from the outside so that pursuit would be impossible, then, throwing the keys into the lake, rowed his passenger ashore. George Douglas, Lord Seyton, and other friends were waiting to receive her and conveyed her in triumph to Hamilton.

An army of six thousand men was quickly assembled, the plan being to place the Queen safely in the fortress of Dumbarton, and then give battle to the Regent Murray. The latter was too quick for the allies, however. He was then at Glasgow and marched at once, though with an inferior force, to intercept the advancing army. They met at Langside, now a suburb of Glasgow, and after a fierce struggle the Queen's forces were scattered. Mary herself continued her flight, until she reached the Abbey of Dundrennan, in the County of Kirkcudbright, where she spent her last night in Scotland.

The novelist represents Queen Mary as viewing the battle from the Castle of Crookston, and the unfortunate lady dramatically exclaims, 'O, I must forget much ere I can look with steady eyes on these well-known

CATHCART CASTLE

scenes! I must forget the days which I spent here as the bride of the lost — the murdered' — Here Mary Fleming interrupts to explain to the Abbot that in this castle 'the Queen held her first court after she was married to Darnley.'

Mary could not have witnessed the battle of Langside from Crookston, unless, indeed, she had had, in the language of Sam Weller, instead of eyes, ' a pair o' patent double million magnifyin' gas microscopes of hextra power,' for Langside is at least four miles away and the contour of the country would make such a view impossible. She really watched it from a knoll near the old Castle of Cathcart, which has since been known as Court Knowe. Scott admitted the error, but did not much regret it, as Crookston seemed the place best suited to the dramatic requirements of the tale, because of Mary's former association with the castle. Here again the facts are against him. Crookston was the property of the Earl of Lennox, Darnley's father, but Darnley himself never lived there, except possibly as a boy, before he went to France at the age of sixteen. It seems to be certain to those who have investigated the facts that after his return he had no opportunity of going there and that he and Queen Mary could not have visited the place together, either before or after their marriage.

Nevertheless, Scott was wise to let the incident remain as he wrote it, for 'The Abbot' is not a work of history, but a romance.

# CHAPTER XX

## KENILWORTH

The successful introduction of Mary Queen of Scots as the central figure of 'The Abbot' resulted, not only in repairing the reputation which had been somewhat damaged by its predecessor, but in suggesting the theme of a new novel which was to achieve a popularity second only to 'Ivanhoe.' The desire to portray, in the form of romance, the great rival of Queen Mary, was perhaps irresistible, particularly in view of the fact that it meant a new opportunity to reach that English audience which had given to 'Ivanhoe' so cordial a reception. Constable, the publisher, was of course delighted to have a new English novel and particularly one in which Queen Elizabeth was to be an important figure. With characteristic presumptuousness he argued that it should be a story of the Armada. Scott, however, had been enchanted in his youth by a ballad of the Scotch poet, Mickle, entitled 'Cumnor Hall,' and particularly by its first stanza: —

> The dews of summer night did fall;
> The moon, sweet regent of the sky,
> Silver'd the walls of Cumnor Hall,
> And many an oak that grew thereby.

He insisted, therefore, in spite of his adviser, upon taking the theme of the ballad for his subject and would even have called the novel 'Cumnor Hall.' In deference to Constable, however, he accepted the title, Kenil-

worth,' although John Ballantyne growled a little at a name which he thought suggested 'something worthy of a kennel.'

Here, then, were the determining points of the new novel, namely, a favourite poem concerning the marriage of the Earl of Leicester to a lady whom he kept concealed at Cumnor Hall, the desire to sketch, in a romantic way, the character of Queen Elizabeth, and the opportunity to secure a dramatic climax by confronting the Queen with the wife of her favourite courtier, in the splendid castle of the latter at Kenilworth.

Cumnor is one of those lovely little villages in the Midlands of England where Father Time employs his talents as an artist, softening the outlines of the stone walls and fences with graceful mantles of dark green ivy and imparting richer and deeper shades of brown to the old thatched roofs of the cottages.

We saw few evidences of activity on the part of the inhabitants, and reached the conclusion that Cumnor, in Walter Scott's time, and even in the days of the Earl of Leicester, could not have been very different from its present aspect.

We did not ruin our reputation as travellers by failing to 'wet a cup at the bonny Black Bear,' for that 'excellent inn of the old stamp,' if indeed it ever existed, has disappeared as effectually as its famous landlord, Giles Gosling. Its prototype, bearing the sign of the 'Bear and Ragged Staff,' formerly stood opposite the church, but its bar-room became objectionable to the vicar and, by what a local writer calls 'an impious act of vandalism,' the inn was destroyed.

Cumnor Place has likewise disappeared. The site

where it stood appears to be a comparatively small piece of land, near the street, but well covered with large trees. It was not an extensive park with formal walks and avenues, nor was the house itself so large or high as the structure described in the novel. It was a single-story building or series of buildings, forming an enclosure about seventy feet long and fifty feet wide. It was built about 1350 as a country residence for the Abbot of Abingdon and as a sanitarium for the monks. After two centuries its use by the monastery ceased and Cumnor Place passed into the hands of the Court physician, George Owen, who leased it to Anthony Foster. As the servant of Lord Robert Dudley, Foster received into his house the ill-fated Amy Robsart, whom that gentleman had married in 1550. The marriage was not secret, but was celebrated in the presence of the young King, Edward VI, and his Court. It had been arranged by Dudley's father, John, Earl of Warwick and Duke of Northumberland, who seems to have had a fondness for match-making, of the kind which promised a profit. He managed to marry his fourth son, Guildford Dudley, to Lady Jane Grey, a great-granddaughter of Henry VII. In the last two years of the reign of Edward VI, Northumberland was virtually the ruler of England. He induced the King to execute a will, disinheriting his two sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, who were the legal heirs to the crown, and naming Lady Jane Grey as his successor. The reign of this unfortunate lady, who never desired the throne, lasted but nine days. The rightful Queen, Mary, was restored by the people, and Northumberland, like his father before him, was beheaded in the Tower. His son, Guildford, with Jane

LEICESTER'S BUILDINGS, KENILWORTH

Grey, his wife, suffered the same penalty a year later, as the result of another revolt, in which the lady, at least, had no share.

Robert Dudley came near falling a victim to the same fate as his father and grandfather. He took up arms against Queen Mary, was sent to the Tower and condemned to death. But the Queen pardoned him and made him Master of the Ordnance. On the accession of Elizabeth he became Master of the Horse, and thereafter rose rapidly in the royal favour. Elizabeth made him a Knight of the Garter, bestowed upon him the Castle of Kenilworth, the lordship of Denbigh and other rich lands in Warwickshire and Wales. In 1564 the Queen made him Earl of Leicester, and recommended him (perhaps not seriously) as a possible husband of Mary Queen of Scots. The University of Oxford made him their chancellor and the King of France conferred upon him the order of St. Michael. He reached the culmination of the high honours which Elizabeth and others crowded upon him, in the appointment as Lieutenant-General of the army mustered to meet the Spanish invasion, in the year of the great Armada, 1588.

This was the outward show, and it was brilliant enough; but the Earl was like a worm-eaten apple — fair enough to look upon, but rotten to the core — and his private life was thoroughly contemptible. The marriage to Amy Robsart in 1550 was not a happy one. She was never a countess, for Dudley did not become Earl of Leicester until four years after her death. After the favours of Elizabeth began to be showered upon him, Dudley had good reason for concealing this marriage, for the Queen soon began to show a longing to make him

her royal husband. In 1560, two years after the accession of Elizabeth, the dead body of Amy was found at the foot of the stairs at Cumnor. All the servants had gone to a neighbouring fair and apparently Anthony Foster was the only person besides Amy at home on that day. It was given out that Amy had accidentally fallen downstairs and broken her neck. She was ostentatiously buried in the Church of St. Mary the Virgin in Oxford, though Lord Dudley was not present at the funeral nor did he again visit Cumnor.

More than twenty years later a pamphlet was published, anonymously, under the title 'Leicester's Commonwealth,' in which the Earl was bitterly attacked as an atheist and a traitor as well as a man of infamous character. He was openly accused of the murder of his wife, and there were not wanting many evidences seeming to corroborate this view. It was alleged that efforts to poison her were made, by direction of the Earl. That Leicester was not incapable of such an act is indicated by the circumstances of his own death. The tradition is that he gave his wife (the third one) a bottle of medicine to be used for faintness. The lady kept it, unused, and later, not knowing it to be poison, administered a dose to her husband, with a fatal result. This lady was the widow of Walter, Earl of Essex, with whom the Earl of Leicester was carrying on an intrigue before her husband's death. There was a quarrel and Essex died suddenly, under some suspicion of poison. Leicester's secret marriage with the widow led to serious accusations against him. According to the author of 'Leicester's Commonwealth,' when the Earl fell in love with Lady Douglas Sheffield (who became his second wife),

her husband suddenly died under mysterious circumstances. Leicester had in his employ an Italian physician who was a skilful compounder of poisons. It was said that his cunning and skill enabled him to cause a person to die with the symptoms of any disease he might choose, or to administer a poison so that the victim would expire at whatever hour he might appoint. These weird tales no doubt suggested something of the character of the fraudulent alchemist and astrologer, Alasco.

The stair at the foot of which Amy Robsart's body was found was a narrow winding flight, something like a corkscrew. It has been pointed out that Amy would have had considerable difficulty in hurling herself headlong around the twists and turns of such a staircase with enough force to break her neck. Without definite knowledge of the facts, the most reasonable supposition is that Lord Dudley, having a motive for the crime and being a man of unscrupulous character, would not hesitate to order it committed. His grandfather had been the agent of Henry VII in the infamous extortions which gave that sovereign an enormous fortune; his father had not hesitated to risk the lives of his son and an innocent lady to accomplish his own treasonable purposes, besides directly causing the death of the Duke of Somerset, and indirectly bringing about the execution of the Duke's brother, Lord Seymour. It is therefore not unreasonable to suppose that the scion of this ambitious family, who was himself cherishing no less bold a project than his own marriage with the Queen, should willingly give orders to remove the one great obstacle in his path.

The great festivities at Kenilworth occurred in 1575. Amy Robsart had been dead fifteen years. The Earl of

Leicester was none the less entangled, however, for he was at the time married to Lady Sheffield, who strongly maintained the validity of the marriage, though it was denied by the Earl and concealed from the Queen. At the same time, also, the intrigue with the Countess of Essex was in progress. From this it will be seen that although Scott departed from the facts of history in bringing poor Amy to Kenilworth, he nevertheless gave a true picture of the Earl of Leicester's embarrassment in the presence of his Queen. Scott softens the black-hearted villainy of the Earl, by making him an unwilling victim of his own ambition, duped into deeds of infamy by the determination of the conscienceless Richard Varney. He admits that he preferred to make the Earl 'rather the dupe of villains than the unprincipled author of their atrocities,' because in the latter capacity, he would have been a character too disgustingly wicked for the purposes of fiction.

According to Scott's account, the unfortunate Amy, after falling completely into the toils of Varney, was carried back to Cumnor Place, and lodged in a tower room at the top of the building. A gallery, arranged by a secret contrivance to be used as a drawbridge, which, when dropped, would cut off all access to the chamber, was the only means of entrance or exit. After Amy had entered the chamber, Varney and Foster withdrew the supports of the bridge in such manner that the slightest weight would cause it to fall. Varney then reached the consummation of his villainy by imitating the whistle of Leicester. Amy, deceived by the signal and eager to meet her Lord, rushed upon the bridge and fell to the deepest vault of the castle. The method of the real

CÆSAR'S TOWER, KENILWORTH

Amy's death is not definitely known, but it was probably by no such elaborate invention. She was doubtless strangled in her room and her body carried to the foot of the stairs to suggest an accidental death.

Anthony Foster lies buried in Cumnor Church, which stands on land adjoining the site of Cumnor Place, near the entrance to the village on the road from Oxford. It is one of those stone churches, with square, substantial towers and ivy-clad walls, which add to the charm of the landscape throughout the length and breadth of England, as though she intended thereby to express both the beauty and the solidity of her religion.

The Foster tomb is an elaborate monument of grey marble, within the altar rail, and is easily the most noteworthy feature of the interior of the church. Two engraved brass plates represent the family at prayers, and beneath is a long inscription in Latin, indicating that Anthony Foster was a distinguished gentleman of good birth, skilled in the arts of music and horticulture, a good linguist and renowned for charity, benevolence, and religious fidelity. Looking upon this elaborate memorial, one cannot escape the conviction that Tony Foster was either a greatly maligned saint or the parent of a family of hypocrites. If the intention of those who composed the inscription was to convince the world of his innocence, they could not have been expected to foresee that, for every person who should read and understand the epitaph, ten thousand would be led to a perception of Foster's real character through the pen of a Scottish novelist, but for whom few of us would ever have known the sad story of the Lady of Cumnor Hall.

As for the Earl of Leicester, a more truthful epitaph exists, not indeed carved upon stone, but preserved in the Collections of Drummond of Hawthornden. It reads: —

Here lies a valiant warrior,
  Who never drew a sword;
Here lies a noble courtier,
  Who never kept his word;
Here lies the Erle of Leister,
  Who govern'd the estates;
Whom the earth could never living love,
  And the just Heaven now hates.

The escape of Amy Robsart from Cumnor Place was achieved through the aid of Wayland Smith, a blacksmith, pedler, and strolling juggler, who had picked up from a former master some knowledge of medicine which he employed to good advantage. There was a legend current in Berkshire of a mysterious smith, who lived among the rocks and replaced lost horseshoes for a fee of sixpence, feeling offended if more were offered. Scott used this tale as the basis of his story of Wayland Smith. The idea of having his smithy in a cave may have been suggested by just such a place in Gilmerton, a village on the outskirts of Edinburgh, with which Scott must have been familiar. I had no difficulty in finding it. It is an artificial cavern, with many ramifications, and as the light can enter only from the door at the head of a stone stairway, its farther corners are extremely dark. Near the entrance is a blacksmith's forge. In a small and dark alcove opposite is an oblong stone, evidently intended as a dining-table. A rough shelf or ledge, cut out of the stone partition, served as a bench at meal-times. Any of the dark corners could be

used as sleeping-rooms. The cave was probably used by thieves or smugglers as a convenient hiding-place.

Amy's journey from Cumnor Village, four miles west of Oxford, to Kenilworth, in the centre of Warwickshire, was a ride of about fifty miles. Perhaps the Countess's mental condition would not permit her to enjoy it and doubtless the country then was wild and the roads rough; but the route to-day would be a delightful one, especially that part of it which passes through Warwickshire with its 'hedgerows of unmarketable beauty.'

As they approached the old town of Warwick, travelling by circuitous paths to avoid the crowds then journeying to witness the festivities at Kenilworth, Amy and her humble guide, the blacksmith, passed through some of the most beautiful country in England. But they were obliged to avoid what to-day forms the grand climax of interest to the tourist, the magnificent Castle of Warwick. This was the resting-place of Queen Elizabeth on the day preceding her triumphal progress to Kenilworth. In those days it was the seat of Ambrose Dudley, a brother to the Earl of Leicester and the third son of the notorious John Dudley.

There was never a time, say the local antiquaries, back as far as the reign of the celebrated King Arthur, when Warwick did not have its Earls. The most renowned of these was Guy, a great warrior supposed to stand nine feet high, among whose exploits were the killing of 'a Saracen giant, a wild boar, a dun cow, and a green dragon.' After a life devoted to these pleasant diversions, he retired to Guy's Cliffe, a retreat near Warwick, famed for its natural beauty, where he lived as a hermit until his death. The real building of the

castle began when the Normans took possession, William the Conqueror granting the vast estate, including the castle and the town, to Henry de Newburgh, the first Earl of Warwick. In the fifteenth century it came into the possession of Richard Neville, the famous 'King-Maker.' Since that time many improvements have been made, especially in the spacious grounds, which now make a splendid park, with well-kept lawns and paths, stately trees, formal gardens with yews fantastically trimmed, and a profusion of flowers.

The entrance road, cut through solid rock, looks as if carved out of soft moss, so thickly does the ivy cling to the walls. Trees of varied foliage overarch the path, and near the entrance the edges are bordered by narrow lines of flowers. At the end of this delightful avenue a sharp turn to the left brought us in front of the great Castle. On the right is Guy's Tower, rising one hundred and twenty-eight feet high and having walls ten feet thick. On the left is Cæsar's Tower, built by the Normans eight hundred years ago and still firm as the rock upon which it stands. The two are joined by an ivy-covered wall in the centre of which is a great gate between two towers. Passing through this gateway we entered the spacious court. Directly opposite is the mound, or keep, almost completely covered from base to summit with trees and shrubs, over the tops of which the towers and battlements peep out. On the right are two unfinished towers, one of them begun by Richard III, the whole side of the quadrangle forming a massive line of ramparts and embattled walls. On the left is the great mansion, occupied for centuries by the Earls of Warwick. The square formed by these huge stone build-

ENTRANCE TO WARWICK CASTLE

ings is beautiful in its simplicity — a wide expanse of lawn, its rich velvet green broken only by the white gravel walks. To see the interior of the castle we were compelled to join a party of tourists, and march in solemn procession through the rooms of state, while our guide, an old soldier with a Cockney accent, loquaciously explained that his 'hobject' in telling us about the 'hearls' in this room was to prepare us to appreciate the 'hearls' in the next! This agony over, we departed by the road which leads across the Avon, where we were rewarded by a superb view of the castle from the bridge.

The next day we were at Kenilworth. It requires the exercise of a vivid imagination to walk among the ruins and trace the progress of Scott's story, but we found it a delightful study. We entered by the little wicket gate, next to the mansion known as the Gatehouse, erected by Dudley in 1570 as the chief entrance to the castle. Walking south, across the outer court, we came to the ancient entrance in the southeast angle known as Mortimer's Tower. From this point an embankment stretched to the southeast for about one hundred and fifty yards. It was eighteen yards wide and twenty feet high. Besides serving its original purpose of a dam, to hold back the waters of a great lake covering one hundred and eleven acres, this bank of earth made an admirable tilt-yard. At the extreme end of the embankment was the Gallery Tower, containing a spacious room from which the ladies could witness the tournaments. A wall eight feet high and eighty-five feet long is all that remains of this structure. It was built by Henry III in the thirteenth century and reconstructed

by the Earl of Leicester in preparation for the great festivities.

Here Amy presented herself under strange circumstances. As the wife of the great Earl of Leicester, the magnificent castle was her own and all its army of servants, and the vast crowd of sight-seers, could they have recognized their countess, would have bowed in humble reverence and have delighted to execute her slightest wish. But she came unknown and unrespected, not as the honoured Countess, but as 'the bale of woman's gear' belonging to a blacksmith, disguised as a juggler. At the Gallery Tower the two strange companions were halted by a giant porter, and gained admission only by the intercession of the mischievous little imp called Flibbertigibbet. They traversed the length of the tilt-yard, and passing through Mortimer's Tower, came in front of the splendid buildings, all with doors and gates wide open as a sign of unlimited hospitality.

On their right stood the stately Cæsar's Tower, a fine specimen of the military architecture of the Normans, built about 1170 to 1180, and still the best-preserved portion of the ruins. On their left was the great 'Leicester's Building,' erected in honour of the occasion for the accommodation of the Queen. It reached a height of ninety-three feet and was ninety feet long and fifty feet wide. The walls are thin, however, and although the most recent in date of all the important parts of the castle, this structure has crumbled into ruins to such an extent that it can be preserved only by constant attention.

Between Cæsar's Tower and Leicester's Building, and joining the two, Amy and her guide saw a stately edifice,

then known as King Henry VIII's Lodgings, because it was used by that monarch on the occasion of his visits to the castle. The portion on the left, immediately adjoining Leicester's Building, was called Dudley's Lobby. No vestige of these structures, which originally formed the eastern side of a magnificent quadrangle, can now be seen.

Passing through an open gateway between Cæsar's Tower and King Henry's Lodgings, the Countess entered the Inner Court. On the right, and in the rear of Cæsar's Tower, she could see the great kitchens, then a busy part of the establishment, but now showing little more than the remains of a huge fireplace and a thick wall from which project a broken arch or two. On the left were the White Hall, now entirely destroyed, and next to it the Presence Chamber, which had a fine oriel window looking into the court. Directly in front Amy could see the 'Great Hall' in which her princely husband had made lavish preparations to entertain the Queen with unprecedented extravagance. It was built in the fourteenth century by John of Gaunt, son of Edward III, who took up his residence at the castle on the death of his father, and spent the remainder of his life in adding to its magnificence. The hall was ninety feet long and forty-five feet wide. The floor has disappeared, but the remains of the pillars and arches which once supported it may still be seen. The Great Hall was lighted by large and very high windows, set in deep recesses, the outlines of which are still well preserved. The remains of two large fireplaces, one on each side, may still be seen. At the southern end was a dais, upon which was the Throne of State, with crimson canopy of

richly embroidered velvet. At the opposite end was a minstrel gallery for the musicians. From the centre of the roof hung a chandelier of brass, shaped like an eagle, its spreading wings supporting six human figures, each of which carried a pair of branches containing huge candles. The tables, chairs, cushions, carpets, and silken tapestries were all of the costliest workmanship. It is stated that the Earl of Leicester spent £60,000 upon this lavish entertainment, a sum which, to-day, would be better represented by half a million.

Amy and her escort were not at liberty to view this regal magnificence. They proceeded across the court to a tower at the northwestern angle, which was doubtless intended for a prison, judging from the thickness of the walls and the small size of the rooms. It was called, for this reason, the Strong Tower, though Scott's name for it is Mervyn's Tower. During the Elizabethan festivities it was used for the accommodation of guests. Here we must leave Amy for the present and go back to trace the movements of Elizabeth.

The Queen approached by way of the Gallery Tower, heralded by the roll of drums, the blare of trumpets, the roar of cannon, and the tumultuous shouts of a vast multitude. Two hundred thick waxen torches, each borne by a horseman, cast a glare of light upon the cavalcade. The Queen, mounted upon a milk-white horse and clad in gorgeous raiment, blazing with jewels, was accompanied by the Earl of Leicester, 'glittering like a golden image with jewels and cloth of gold.' He rode a jet-black horse, renowned as one of the most splendid chargers in Europe. Both horse and rider seemed perfectly formed to grace an occasion so glorious.

MERVYN'S TOWER, KENILWORTH

A great procession of the most distinguished noblemen, the ablest statesmen, and the proudest knights of England followed the Queen, together with the ladies of the Court, famed for splendour and beauty and arrayed in garments only a little less magnificent than those of the Queen herself. Passing upon the bridge or dam which stretched between the gallery and Mortimer's Tower, the royal procession paused to witness a gorgeous spectacular performance on the lake. Then, entering the Base Court, they moved through various pageants to the Inner Court, and came at length to the Great Hall, where the Queen was handed to the Throne by the Earl of Leicester.

The Pleasance was an irregular-shaped enclosure, visible to the west from Mervyn's Tower and connecting with a rectangular section on the north known as the garden. The latter had a terrace along the castle wall, ten feet high and twelve feet wide, covered with grass and decorated with obelisks, spheres, and stone bears. At each end was an arbour of trees and fragrant flowers. The garden was intersected by walks or alleys, each of which had, in the middle, a square pilaster, fifteen feet high, surmounted by an orb. In the centre of the garden was a fountain of white marble, its pedestal carved with allegorical subjects and surmounted by two Atlantes, back to back, holding a ball, from which streams of water poured into the basin. At the side of the terrace was a large aviary, well filled with birds.

This was the scene of the dramatic climax toward which the novel trends, where Queen Elizabeth finally confronts Amy Robsart and begins to unravel the whole story of Leicester's duplicity.

Aside from their associations with the novel, the ruins of Kenilworth seem to exert a strong fascination. It is as though Nature were reasserting herself. A thousand years ago the domain was untouched by the hand of man. Then came kings and conquerors, who replaced the pristine beauty with artificial structures. Stately halls and palaces sprang into existence. Their inner walls were hung with the costliest of silks. Their floors were covered with the richest carpets from the looms of the Orient. Chairs, stools, tables, and bedsteads of elaborate workmanship, gorgeously covered with lace and embroidered with cloth of gold; paintings; musical instruments; curiously wrought plate, of silver and mother-of-pearl; everything, indeed, that the handicraft of the times could fashion and the wealth of its owners could buy, was brought to the castle in mute testimonial of man's conception of beauty. But these things passed. Kings and queens no longer made the castle their home, nor honoured it with even a brief visit. The people seized the government and, jealous lest royalty should again find shelter there, demolished the costly buildings. For the sake of a few pounds of lead, the roofs were torn away and sold. The artificial dam which backed up the waters of the great lake was cut and the waters flowed once more in their natural channels. Nature again assumed control. The formal gardens became a green pasture. The spacious courts which had been worn hard by the iron hoofs of countless steeds became soft again with a covering of deep and velvety grass. The proud war-horses vanished and in their place the gentle sheep appeared. The frightful scars on the face of the ruined buildings were concealed

beneath a rich cloak of deep-green ivy. Wall-flowers sprang out of the broken crevices below the arches.

All is peaceful, all is still. Nature has brought to the castle her own conception of beauty, and once more reigns supreme.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE PIRATE

THE Shetland and Orkney Islands, seen from an aëroplane at great height on a calm day, would resemble, I fancy, two handfuls of gravel thrown upon a horizontal sheet of window-glass. When I was a boy they meant little to me except a few black specks at the top of the map of Great Britain. Upon examining a larger map, an active lad might fancy that it would be great fun to skip from one island to another, or to play tag, leaping over the numerous indentations in the coast. The Shetland group is broken into about one hundred islands, stretching north and south for seventy miles, but the total land surface is only five hundred and fifty-one square miles, or less than half the area of the State of Rhode Island. The Orkney group, lying fifty miles farther south, is even smaller, its fifty-six islands containing only three hundred and seventy-five square miles.

Upon closer acquaintance, however, the islands do not seem so diminutive. Great rugged cliffs tower perpendicularly to enormous heights above the sea-level. Huge broken fragments of rock form gigantic towers, or stacks, rising out of the sea to a height of hundreds of feet. One of the most picturesque of these, the Old Man of Hoy, would tower above the dome of St. Peter's in Rome. Our small boy, standing on the edge of one of these cliffs, looking down upon the ocean, boiling and seething through strange caverns and natural arches,

five hundred feet below, would quickly forget his desire to leap to the nearest island. The wildness of the scene is accentuated by the screaming of thousands of cormorants, guillemots, and gulls, mingling with the roar of the sea and the mournful soughing of the wind.

We sailed into the Sound of Bressay, the harbour of Lerwick, at twelve o'clock on a Saturday night in June. It was still light enough to see plainly, for in these regions the summer sun has to rise so early in the morning that he does not think it worth while to go to bed. Expecting to land at the wharf of some quiet little seaport town, we were astonished at the sight which the twilight revealed. A forest of masts crowded the sound, which is here a mile wide. It was at the height of the herring-fishing, and nearly a thousand vessels had arrived to land their fish and enable their crews to spend Sunday on shore, for these fishermen observe the Sabbath, piously or otherwise, as a day of rest. All the remainder of that night and all day Sunday the stone pavements of Lerwick resounded to the clatter of wooden shoes worn by the Dutch fishermen. These Dutchmen are largely responsible for the importance of Lerwick, having discovered many years ago that it would be a convenient centre for the curing and shipping of herring. Other nations are also represented, particularly Norway, Sweden, Germany, and France, while the native Shetlanders still retain a portion of the trade, though relatively a small one. Besides filling the harbour, the vessels were crowded along the quays, five or six deep, so that the crews of late arrivals could reach the shore only by crossing the decks of several other ships. As soon as possible after a boat arrives, its cargo is auctioned off at

the Fishmarket, after which it proceeds to one of the curing stations. Nearly all the vessels were 'steam-drifters,' which have superseded the old sailing-boats. These drifters usually carry a crew of ten men. Their engines are capable of ten knots an hour, sometimes more. As it often happens that profitable shoals of fish cannot be found without travelling at least a hundred miles, the advantage over the old sailing-ships is apparent.

Crowds of people flock to Lerwick in the season to look for employment in the curing establishments. On the little steamer which conveyed us thither, we noticed, in various out-of-the-way corners of the deck, what seemed to be piles of black and brown rags. They were there when we came on board at Aberdeen, and remained nearly all the next day. They turned out to be women, huddling together to keep warm, and covered only by their thick dresses and a few old shawls. They belonged to a class known by the not very pleasing, but thoroughly descriptive, name of *gutters*, and were making their annual trip to Lerwick to spend the season in the great curing establishments. These sturdy women become very expert. Each fish is eviscerated with two quick motions of the knife, assisted by the thumb and fingers, the process continuing for long hours, at the rate of about two dozen of herring a minute.

Lerwick, the capital of the Shetland Islands, is a town of picturesque appearance. When it was built there were no carts in the islands, and no occasion for any, for there were no roads. A long zigzag street runs the length of the town, near the shore, and is the main business thoroughfare. A century ago it would have been impossible to drive an ordinary wagon through its narrow and awk-

LERWICK, SHETLAND

ward turnings. Now the buildings are sufficiently altered to admit the passage of teams, but in many places, when a vehicle passes, the pedestrians must step into the nearest doorways. The town is built on a hillside, so that the cross-streets are steep lanes, alternating with short flights of stairs. They have rough pavements, and usually a rail is placed along the buildings for the safety of the pedestrians in icy weather. The main thoroughfare, varying in width from ten to twenty-five feet, is paved with flagging and its stone buildings, though small and of many different shapes, have a substantial look. Strolling through the streets of Lerwick, one might estimate the population at about five thousand; looking out over the harbour on Sunday morning he would be inclined to change the figure to twenty times that number; but again looking seaward on Monday afternoon, when the fishing fleet has disappeared, he would doubtless revert to his original estimate.

The men of the islands are nearly all fishermen. They work hard in the season, which lasts from June to September, and spend their money, during the long dark days of winter, in various amusements. Some maintain small farms of five or ten acres each, known as crofts, where they raise a few cattle and sheep. Only about one sixth of the land is under cultivation, and of this about three fourths is pasture land. The soil and climate of the Shetlands is decidedly unfavourable to agriculture. The women look after the cattle, till the soil in their small kail-yards, or gardens, bring in the winter supply of peat, and attend to all the duties of housekeeping. In the intervals of their busy lives, they knit shawls and other garments, out of wool which they card and spin them-

selves. Indeed, they knit nearly all the time. It is not uncommon to see them walking along the roads or across the moors, with heavy baskets of peat on their backs, the knitting-needles clicking busily, as if every woman had been born with these implements in her hands.

On the morning after our arrival we set out to discover the scenes of 'The Pirate.' Not knowing what changes had occurred since Scott's visit to the islands in 1814, I was not sure whether I should be obliged to catch a Shetland pony upon which to travel or make up my mind to walk the twenty-seven miles between Lerwick and Sumburgh Head, over a roadless country of rocks and mountains, morasses, and quagmires. It was a delight, therefore, to learn not only that there was a good road all the way, but that Lerwick now boasted the possession of an automobile, the only one on the islands. I lost no time in hiring the car, with a chauffeur who said he 'knew the road,' though he afterwards confessed he had never been over it. When he reached the mountainous regions, where the road dodges in and out around a bewildering succession of short curves, along the edges of cliffs from which we could look down upon rugged rocks or into the lakes and voes a hundred feet below, speeding the machine as though he were on level ground and familiar with every foot of it, he gave us a thrill or two at every turn.

We started out in the general direction taken by Mordaunt Mertoun, when he left the comfortable home of Magnus Troil and his two pretty daughters, Minna and Brenda, to return to the forlorn habitation of his father at Jarlshof. There was just enough strong wind, with occasional dashes of rain, to suggest the storm which

A CROFTER'S COTTAGE, ORKNEY

Mordaunt faced. But he had to find his way around the edges of the numerous inland lakes and voes by a kind of instinct, having no path to follow. We travelled, on the contrary, over a good hard road, one of the improvements of the last half-century. Most of the people whom we passed had never seen an automobile. They not only hastily gave us the road, but usually climbed high up on the adjacent banks, sometimes dragging their pony-carts after them. One old man, when he saw us coming, hastily took his horse out of the shafts, and rushed up the side of the hill with the animal, to a safe distance of a hundred yards before he dared look back. The horse gazed upon us in mild-eyed curiosity, but the man's expression of terror suggested that he might have seen old Norna of the Fitful Head herself and her leering, sneering, grinning, and goggling dwarf, Nick Strumpfer, flying along in a vehicle of the Devil's own invention. Though not particularly grateful for the implied compliment, we were obliged to accept some such explanation of the fact, which became more and more apparent, that the men and women feared us far more than did their horses.

At one point we stopped to watch some women gathering peat. Only the wealthy can afford to import coal and there is no wood on the islands, because the fierce winds and rocky soil prevent the growth of trees. The universal fuel for the poor is therefore peat, which seems to have been providentially provided. For a fee of half-a-crown a year, or in some cases a little more, paid to some large landowner, each family may take a winter's supply. Every crofter's cottage has its peat-stack near the door. Peat is simply decayed moss, the most common variety of which is called *Sphagnum*. It is a small plant with

thin, scaly leaves. In the light it has a hue of vivid green, changing in the lower and darker places to a sickly yellow, and finally in the lowest and dampest places, where it is thoroughly decayed, to a deep black. This decayed portion is the peat, which, when well dried, burns with a smouldering fire, of greater heat than an equal weight of wood, but with far greater volume of smoke. The peat-banks resemble miniature terraces, each about a foot high. The cutting is done with a curious spade, with long narrow blade, called a *twiscar* or *tuskar*. The top layer, consisting of coarse dry grasses and the roots of heather and other plants, is of no value. The second layer is a thick, moist, spongy substance of a dark brown or black colour, while the third is still more compressed, and, but for the moisture, looks somewhat like coal. Each spadeful resembles a big, blackened brick, of unusual length. They are laid in rows to dry and finally carried away to the crofter's cottages, generally in baskets. The women swing their heavy loads upon their backs and trudge long distances. Occasionally the peat is loaded upon small sledges drawn by ponies. We saw an old woman, with a very pretty granddaughter, loading their fuel upon one of these sledges, which was drawn by a little 'Sheltie' with furry coat of pure white. The old woman kindly allowed me to take her picture, a favour which two other women declined to grant, because they did n't have on their best clothes!

Burgh-Westra, the home of Magnus Troil and his daughters, is purely fictitious. It was supposed to be twenty miles from Sumburgh Head, which would make it seven miles south of Lerwick. We passed numerous voes, as the long arms of the sea are called, any of which

would have answered the description of the one upon which the Udaller's residence was situated, and we could have found many sheltered places among the rocks, corresponding to that in which Mordaunt Mertoun secretly met Brenda, or to the beach of white sand beneath a precipice, where Minna offered to pledge her hand to the pirate, Cleveland, by the mysterious 'promise of Odin.'

Ten miles below Burgh-Westra was Stourburgh, where Triptolemus Yellowley and Mistress Baby took up their residence. This, too, is fictitious. Sumburgh Head, on the contrary, is very real. It is a rocky promontory, three hundred feet high, at the southern extremity of the Mainland, as the largest of the Shetland Islands is called. Conflicting tides, sweeping around the rugged headland from two oceans, make a dangerous current, called the Roost of Sumburgh, from the Icelandic word, *röst*, signifying a strong tide. It has been a menace to navigation for centuries and the scene of countless shipwrecks. The novelist, quite naturally, therefore, made it the scene of the wreck and rescue of Cleveland. Such a place would appeal strongly to Scott, whose visit to the islands was made on a lighthouse yacht, the business of which was to inspect just such points of danger. He climbed the grassy slope to the top of the head, where he could look down from the loftiest crag upon a wild mass of rocks below, and said it would have been a fine situation in which to compose an ode to the Genius of Sumburgh Head or an elegy upon a cormorant or to have written and spoken madness of any kind. Instead of doing this he gave vent to his enthusiasm by sitting down on the grass and sliding a few hundred feet down to the beach!

Whether the performance was voluntary or involuntary, he did not see fit to inform us.

A short distance north of Sumburgh Head, and in full view of it, we found the ruins of Jarlshof, the abode of Basil Mertoun and his son. It was a poorly built house of rough, unhewn stone, and even at its best must have been desolate enough. Its age and history are not definitely known. Robert Stewart, a son of James V, who received the earldom of the Orkney and Shetland Islands from Mary Queen of Scots in 1565, may have been the builder. He is known to have dwelt in the house, as did his son, Patrick, who abandoned Jarlshof after building the Castle of Scalloway.

When Scott visited Sumburgh he saw nothing in Jarlshof more interesting than a ruined dwelling-house, partly buried by the sand, and once the residence of one of the Orkney earls. But directly beneath his feet, though he knew it not, was an object that would have delighted his antiquarian instincts more than anything else in the islands. He gave great attention to the old Pictish castles or *brochs*, especially to a small one on the shores of a lake near Lerwick, called by him *Cleikhim-in* (Clickimin), and later to the larger tower on the island of Mousa. Here at Jarlshof, though the fact was unknown to the inhabitants at the time of Scott's visit, there was once a series of *brochs*, as old as Mousa or Clickimin, and far more extensive.

This interesting discovery was made in 1897. Mr. John Bruce, the principal landowner in the parish of Kinrossness, upon whose property the ruin of Jarlshof stands, noticing the encroachments of the sea after a storm, began to suspect the existence of masonry be-

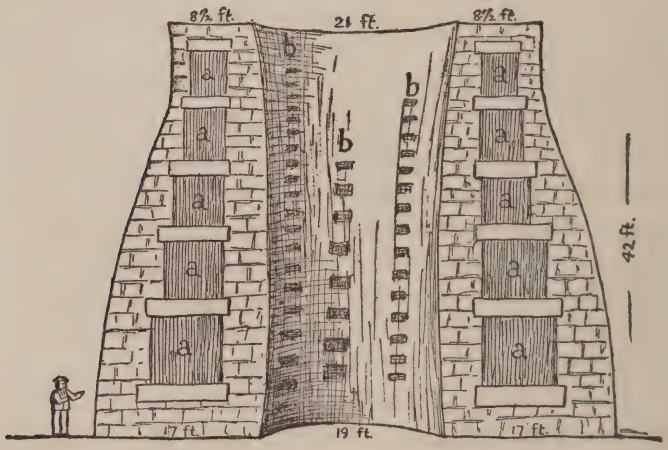
SUMBURGH HEAD, SHETLAND

neath the old castle. Two friends who were visiting him saw what seemed to be jutting ends of walls. They threw off their coats and began to excavate, continuing with enthusiasm until they discovered, to their great surprise, evidences of a far more extensive building than they had suspected. Mr. Bruce then engaged labourers and continued the work of excavation for five years.

The Castle of Jarlshof was erected on top of an older structure, the existence of which was evidently entirely unknown to the builder. The excavations reveal a circular tower sixty-three feet in diameter, similar in design to the other Shetland brochs, but larger at the base. Its main wall is pierced with a passage three feet wide, evidently leading to a staircase, and it has, within its thickness several chambers. Half of the broch has been swept away by the sea. On the west are portions of three smaller buildings, resembling beehives in form, the largest of which is oval in shape with a length of thirty-four feet and a width of nineteen. Outside of this structure was a great wall, varying from ten to twenty feet thick. It has been uncovered for a distance of seventy feet. Its shape suggests that it may have been part of a great circular wall surrounding the whole group of buildings, of which the central tower was the strongest and most important. Away back in the eighth or ninth century, some Pictish ruler may have constructed this immense fortress at the southern end of the islands, to repel attacks by sea, and to afford a refuge to the inhabitants in case of danger. Had Walter Scott known of its existence, he would have fairly revelled in the discovery, and perhaps the plot of 'The Pirate' might have been different.

Standing on the sands at Jarlshof, we could see, toward the northwest, the towering promontory of the Fitful Head, rising nine hundred and twenty-eight feet above the sea. This seemed a little puzzling at first, for Scott places the residence of Norna of the Fitful Head at the extreme northwestern edge of the Mainland. The Pictish burgh, or broch, which Norna is supposed to have inhabited, is on the island of Mousa,[1] off the eastern coast about ten miles north of Sumburgh Head. The Wizard, for a very good reason, set the old tower on the top of a great headland, ten miles to the southwest, and then moved the combination fifty miles to the north.

The dwelling of Norna, therefore, which to the casual reader seems so weird, was a very real thing. It repre-




[1] CROSS-SECTION OF THE BROCH OF MOUSA.

*a, a.* Rooms in circular wall, connected by a rude spiral stair.
*b, b.* Windows opening into the inner court.

sents one of the earliest forms of architecture, a rude attempt to construct a dwelling of loose stones, without cement or timber, and with very slight knowledge of the art of building. The Norsemen did not come to the Shetland Islands until late in the eighth century and they found many of these brochs already in existence. The most perfect of them all is the one on the island of Mousa. It measures fifty-three feet in diameter at the base and thirty-eight feet at the top. It is forty-two feet high. The interior of what appears, externally, to be a rather large building, is less than twenty feet in diameter owing to the peculiar construction of the walls, which are really double. They are seventeen feet wide at the base. Inside the walls is a kind of rude stair, or inclined plane, winding around the building, and a series of very narrow galleries or chambers. These receive air through openings in the inner wall, but, excepting the door, there is no aperture in the outer wall.

This is the real building which Scott made the residence of Norna because of his profound interest in it as a structure of unknown antiquity. But standing in full view, firmly planted on a solid and easily accessible rock, its situation was too commonplace for the requirements of the story. He knew well how to create quite a different impression, by supposing the same kind of house situated in a wild and remote locality, on a ragged piece of rock split off from the main plateau and leaning outward over the sea as though the slightest weight would tumble the whole structure, rock and all, into the ocean. Then, to supply the needed air of mystery, he fancied it occupied by a crazy old witch, claiming sovereignty over the winds and the seas; her servant an ugly, big-mouthed,

tongueless dwarf, with malignant features and a horrible, discordant laugh; her favourite pet an uncouth and uncanny trained seal; her companions the unseen demons of the air; and her occupations the utterance of sibylline prophecies and the incantation of weird spells. Clearly, all this would have been impossible on the island of Mousa, so the author simply adjusted the geography of the country to the requirements of his romance.

Although Lerwick is now the only town of importance in the Shetlands, the village of Scalloway, directly across the Mainland on the eastern coast, once held that distinction. It is picturesquely situated on an arm of the sea. Approaching from the east, we paused at the top of the hill to look down upon it. Just below was one of those long narrow voes, so common in these islands. The whale-hunt described in 'The Pirate' came instantly to mind. It was easy to understand how one of these monsters might come in at high tide and find himself stranded at the ebb. At the mouth of this voe and circling around a small bay of its own lies the quaint little village. At the extremity of a point of land between the voe and the bay, rising higher than any of the surrounding buildings, stands the ruined Castle of Scalloway. It was built in 1600 by Patrick Stewart, the Earl of Orkney to whom I have previously referred. He was the 'Pate Stewart' whose name is still a synonym on the islands for all that is cruel and oppressive. He compelled the people to do his bidding. They were obliged to work in the quarries, drag the stone to the town, build the house as best they could without proper appliances, and perform any kind of menial service he might exact. For this they received a penny a day if the Earl felt good-

SCALLOWAY, SHETLAND

natured. Otherwise they received nothing. If they displeased him they were thrown into dungeons and not infrequently hanged. A huge iron ring near the top of the castle, which was used for this purpose, still bears witness to Pate Stewart's cruelty. He is said to have boasted that the ring seldom lacked a tassel. As mentioned in 'The Pirate,' the inhabitants only remembered one thing to his credit, and that was a law which accorded well with Patrick's own ideas of the rights of people to possess their own property. This was the law, so dear to boyish hearts, of 'finders keepers.' Property washed up from wrecks at sea belonged to those who found it. There was a prevalent superstition that to save a drowning person was unlucky, and no doubt this was one of the results of Pate Stewart's ruling. If a man was not rescued he could claim no rights of property. It was this superstition, so prevalent on the islands, that Scott wove into his plot, making the rescue of Cleveland and the saving of his chest an extremely unlucky occurrence for Mordaunt Mertoun.

We left Lerwick at midnight and stood on deck for an hour enjoying the scenery by twilight. The little steamer was loaded to the gunwales with barrels of fish, piled upon the decks in every nook and corner, so that there was scarcely room to stand, making us feel like two very insignificant bits of merchandise in the midst of such a valuable cargo of good salt herring. In the morning we reached the port of Kirkwall, the capital and chief city of the Orkneys.

Instead of a long busy quay, lined with hundreds of steam-drifters as at Lerwick, we saw an almost empty harbour and a dock, which, but for the arrival of our

own vessel, would have been deserted. The permanent population of the two towns is about the same, Kirkwall having the advantage of the better agricultural facilities of the Orkneys. Its streets are narrow like those in Lerwick. Bridge Street, up which the pirates marched so insolently to meet the city magistrates, and down which they swaggered again, dragging the terrified Triptolemus Yellowley, is one of the narrowest of thoroughfares. It is commonly said that here, 'two wheelbarrows tremble as they meet.' At the end, or 'top' of this street we turned to the right and found ourselves in Albert Street, one striking feature of which is a solitary tree. It was said, enviously, in Lerwick, that the people of Kirkwall were so proud of this wonderful vegetation that they took it in every night and set it out again in the morning.

Kirkwall is far more interesting than Lerwick because of its historical associations, most of which centre about the Cathedral of St. Magnus. The ancient building looks almost modern as you approach the wide plaza opening out from Broad Street. Although older than Melrose, Dryburgh, Holyrood, and Dunfermline abbeys, all of which are now in ruins, and in spite of the fact that it is built of the soft red and yellow sandstone, it still stands, complete and proudly erect. When Melrose was rebuilt, through the munificence of Robert Bruce in the fourteenth century, the central portions of St. Magnus had been standing for two centuries. In the sixteenth century, when an English king was battering down the fine old Gothic churches of Scotland, the people of Kirkwall not only protected their cathedral, but witnessed the addition of some of its finest features, notably the west doorway. In earlier times it had a spire, which, judging

from the massive columns upon which it rested, must have been an imposing one. The steeple was burned in 1671, and never replaced, except by a stumpy little tower which completely spoils the effect of an otherwise impressive building.

The story of the founding of St. Magnus is one of the most interesting of the sagas of the Orkneys. Hakon and Magnus, both grandsons of the great Earl Thorfinn, were joint rulers of the islands. Hakon was ambitious and treacherous; Magnus was virtuous, kind-hearted, and well-beloved. By a wicked conspiracy of Hakon and his associates, the saintly Magnus was murdered in the island of Egilsay in 1115, bravely meeting his death as a noble martyr. Hakon died soon after, and his son Paul inherited the earldom. Another claimant appeared in the person of Rognvald, a nephew of Earl Magnus, now called 'Saint' Magnus, a bold and skilful warrior and a born leader of men. Before proceeding against Paul, Rognvald accepted the advice of his father, who told him not to trust to his own strength, but to make a vow, that if, by the grace of St. Magnus, he should succeed in gaining his inheritance, he would build and dedicate to him a minster in Kirkwall, more magnificent in size and splendour than any other in the North. With the powerful but mysterious assistance of Sweyn Asleifson, 'the last of the Vikings,' who seized Earl Paul and carried him away bodily, Earl Rognvald became the sole ruler of the earldom. He set to work at once to fulfil his vow, and began work upon the cathedral in the year 1137.

The massiveness of the building is best realized by looking into the nave from the west doorway. The roof

is supported by immense round pillars of red sandstone, seven on each side. On the north and south of these pillars are long aisles, the walls of which are covered with ancient tombstones, taken up from the floor and set on end. In the north aisle is a *mort-brod*, or death-board, inscribed with the name of a departed Orcadian, whose picture is shown, sitting on the ground in his grave-clothes, a spade over his shoulder, an hour-glass in his lap, and a joyful grin on his face. On the reverse is the following: —

Below
Doeth lye
If ye wold trye
Come read upon
This brod
The Corps of on Robert
Nicholsone who$^{s}$ soul$^{s}$ above
With God.
He being 70 years of age ended
This mortal life and 50 of that he
Was married to Jeane Davidson
His wife. Betwixt them 2
12 children had, whereof
5 left behind the
other 7 with him 's
In Heaven, who's
Joy's shall
never
end

In the south aisle are some curious tombstones, most of them having carved representations of the skull and crossbones. The death's heads are all much enlarged on the left side, the Orcadian idea being that the soul escapes at death through the left ear.

The pirate, Cleveland, it will be remembered, was kept a prisoner in these aisles, and was walking about disconsolately when Minna Troil entered. Concealed from the guards at the door by the huge pillars, they planned an escape. Suddenly Norna of the Fitful Head mysteriously appeared, and warning Minna that her plan would lead to certain discovery, sent the young woman away. Norna then led Cleveland through a secret passage out of the church to a place of safety. In the south aisle there is a low arch which formerly led, so it is said, through a secret underground passage to the Bishop's Palace across the street. This fact doubtless suggested to the novelist the means by which Norna might spirit away the captive pirate.

Across the street which runs by the south side of the cathedral are the ruins of two large mansions. The Bishop's Palace, which is not mentioned in 'The Pirate,' is chiefly interesting from the fact that Hakon Hakonson, the last of the great sea-kings of Norway, after his splendid fleet had been driven on the rocks by the fury of a great storm and there almost annihilated by the fierce onset of the Scottish warriors, sought refuge within its walls, only to die a few days later. This was in 1263. How much older the palace is, nobody knows.

The Earl's Palace, with its grounds, occupies the opposite corner, a narrow street intervening between the two ruins. The enclosure is filled with sycamores and other trees, thus refuting the slander of the envious Shetlanders. In fact, when we came to look for them, we found more than one enclosure in Kirkwall which could boast of fairly good-sized trees. The castle is, or was, a very substantial building, with fine broad stair-

ways and many turrets. Seen from the south, across the bowling-green, it might be taken for the ruin of some large church. It was built by the notorious Patrick Stewart, the same earl who abandoned Jarlshof, and compelled the people to build him a larger castle at Scalloway. By the same methods, he constructed the palace at Kirkwall, forcing the people to quarry the stone and do all his work without pay. An example of his tyranny was related to me by a resident of Kirkwall. According to this tale, the Earl coveted a piece of land adjoining the palace, with which the owner refused to part. Patrick, not accustomed to be thwarted in his plans, was quick to apply the remedy. He secretly caused some casks of brandy to be buried in the desired tract. In due time he began to complain that somebody was stealing his liquor and finally charged his neighbour with the offence. The casks were then triumphantly 'discovered' as proof positive. Inasmuch as the Earl was his own judge, jury, and court of appeals, the poor innocent landowner was quickly condemned, hanged, and his property confiscated. Many a man made over a part of his land to the Earl on demand, having no alternative.

We noticed many portholes under the windows, showing that the castle was intended to serve as a fortress as well as a mansion. This was the secret of the Earl's final downfall. The authorities of Edinburgh could go to sleep when the Earl of the far-distant islands merely oppressed his own people, but to fortify a castle against the King was an act of treason. When Patrick Stewart and his son Robert prepared to maintain their independence by fortifying not only the castle but the cathedral, Scotland woke up. The Earl of Caithness

was sent against the rebels. Robert, who was in command, withstood the siege for one month, when he was overcome, carried to Edinburgh, and hanged. Patrick took refuge in the Castle of Scalloway and for a time baffled his pursuers by hiding in a secret chamber. He could not resist the consolation of tobacco and took a few surreptitious pulls at his pipe, while the searchers were in the house. The smoke, or the smell, betrayed him. He was speedily taken to Edinburgh, where he paid the penalty on the gallows of a long career of tyranny, cruelty, extortion, confiscation, robbery, and murder.

The most interesting room in the Earl's castle is the banqueting-hall, which had a high roof or ceiling and was lighted on the south by three tall but narrow arched windows. On one side is a huge fireplace with two arches, the lower one flat. Supporting this curious combination are two pillars, on which are carved the initials P.E.O., meaning Patrick, Earl of Orkney, the letters being still legible. In this room Cleveland is supposed to have met Jack Bunce upon his return to Kirkwall.

The two pirates, after leaving the castle, walked to Wideford Hill, two miles from the town, where the Fair of St. Olla was being held. The annual Lammas Market or Fair at this place is still one of the institutions of Kirkwall, although no longer so important as in the time of 'The Pirate.'

If Scott took liberties with the geography of Shetland, he was scrupulously exact in his treatment of the Orkneys. Every movement of the brig of Magnus Troil, as well as those of the pirate ship, can be traced on the map. The latter, it will be recalled, sailed around to

Stromness, where she dropped anchor. Two inland lakes, known as the Loch of Stennis and the Loch of Harray, now favourite resorts for anglers, lie northeast of the town. They are separated by a narrow causeway called the Bridge of Brogar. This is the place where the pirates landed their boat on the night of the final tragedy of the story. We found the locality one of the most interesting in the islands.

At the entrance of the bridge stands a huge, rough-hewn stone, eighteen feet high, known as the 'watch-stone' or 'sentinel.' This is the largest of the 'stones of Stennis,' a collection of ancient monoliths comparable in Great Britain only to those of Stonehenge. At the farther end of the bridge is the so-called 'Circle of the Sun,' a ring about one hundred and twenty yards in diameter, surrounded by a trench about six feet deep. The stones composing this circle are from eight to sixteen feet high and of irregular shape. One of them is at least five or six feet wide. There were about forty stones originally, but now only fifteen remain standing. A smaller group, known as the 'Circle of the Moon,' but composed of larger stones, stands in a field near the eastern end of the bridge. A horizontal stone, laid on top of these vertical ones, makes a rude table or altar. This may have been a place of druidical sacrifices, if the most prevalent belief is to be accepted, or possibly the work of Scandinavian hands. It was by this table of stone that Minna stood, to meet and bid farewell to her lover, looking like a druidical priestess, or, if the Scandinavian theory be accepted, 'she might have seemed a descended vision of Freya, the spouse of the Thundering Deity, before whom some bold sea-king or champion bent with an awe

THE STANDING STONES OF STENNIS

which no mere mortal terror could have inflicted upon him.'

The Stone of Odin formerly stood on the east side of this circle. Minna had offered to pledge her faith to Cleveland by the 'promise of Odin' and Norna of the Fitful Head had married her lover by the same rite. This stone differed from the others only in the fact that it had a round hole near the base. Lovers who found it inconvenient to be married by a priest, or who wished to plight their troth by some unusually solemn vow, resorted to this stone, and a promise here given was regarded as sacred and never to be broken. The marriage ceremony was peculiar. The couple first visited the Circle of the Moon, where the woman, in the presence of the man, knelt and prayed to the god Woden, or Odin, that he would enable her to perform all her obligations and promises. They next went to the Circle of the Sun, where the man in like manner made his prayers. Then they returned to the Stone of Odin, where, the man standing on one side and the woman on the other, they joined hands through the hole and took upon themselves the solemn vows of matrimony. Such a marriage could never be broken.

Scott visited the Stones of Stennis in 1814. Had he arrived a year later he would not have seen the Stone of Odin, for some irreverent Orcadian broke it up, probably to help build the foundation of his cottage.

Leaving, with some reluctance, these relics of a civilization more than a thousand years old, we resumed our journey toward Stromness. The town lies on the slope of a hill, resembling Lerwick in this respect and in the closeness of the houses to the sea. Some of the buildings

stand so near the water that parts of the bay look like a miniature Venice. Our motor-car frequently occupied the entire width of the street, sidewalks and all, as we twisted our tortuous course for a mile along the main thoroughfare. From the high ground behind the town, we had a fine view of the sea, and across the sound, the great towering island of Hoy, the highest and most impressive of all the Orkney group. On the western side a long line of precipitous cliffs, rising a thousand feet above the sea, opposes an unbroken front to the full force of the Atlantic. At the western end as we saw it from above Stromness, the rocks form the profile of a man's face, not so stern as that in the Franconia Notch of the White Mountains, but having rather a more genial look. It is said to resemble Sir Walter Scott, a likeness which, I confess, I could see only when I shut my eyes and thought of Chantrey's bust.

The island of Hoy plays an important part in 'The Pirate.' It was the original home of Norna when the old witch was a handsome young girl. The Dwarfie Stone, where she met the demon Trolld, and bartered her life's happiness for the power to control the tempests and the waves of the sea, is on the southwest slope of Ward Hill, the highest peak of which rises to a height of over fifteen hundred feet. It is in a desolate peat-bog, two miles from the nearest human habitation. The stone is about thirty feet long and half as wide. Hollowed out of the interior is a chamber, with two beds, one of them a little over five feet long. It is difficult to conceive why any human being should have taken the trouble to cut out the rock for a hermitage or place of refuge, or why any one should seek so desolate an abode.

Tradition therefore affirmed that the rock was fashioned by spirit hands and was the dwelling of the elfin dwarf, Trolld. It was to this island that Norna conducted Mordaunt after he had received a wound at the hands of Cleveland.

It was at Stromness that Scott, in 1814, made the acquaintance of Bessie Millie, an aged dame who made her living by selling favourable winds to mariners at the reasonable price of sixpence each. The touch of insanity, and the strong influence she possessed over the natives of the island, who feared her power, were strongly suggestive of Norna. This old sibyl related to Scott the story of John Gow, whose boyhood was spent in Stromness. This daring individual had gone to sea at an early age and returned to the home of his youth, a pirate, commanding a former English galley of two hundred tons which he had captured and renamed the 'Revenge.' He boldly came ashore and mingled with the people, giving dancing-parties in the village of Stromness. Before his real character was known he became engaged to a young woman, and the two plighted their troth at the Stone of Odin. The houses of his former neighbours were plundered and many acts of insolence and violence committed. At length, through the exertions of a former schoolmate, Gow was captured with his entire crew and speedily executed at London. The young woman journeyed to London, too, for the purpose of touching her former lover's dead body. In that way only, according to the superstition of her country, could she obtain a release from her vow and avoid a visit from the pirate's ghost, in case she should ever marry. Gow's brief career furnished an excellent model for Cleveland,

though the author endowed his 'pirate' with some very commendable qualities which the prototype probably did not possess.

Bessie Millie, the old hag of Stromness, needed, in addition to her own eccentricities, only a few touches of the gipsy nature, to make her a good 'original' for Norna. A local preacher in the parish of Tingwall, whom Scott met on his visit to Shetland, is said to have suggested Triptolemus Yellowley. Three or four families, in whose homes the novelist was a welcome visitor, have laid claim to the honour of supplying the 'originals' of Minna and Brenda Troil. These two delightful characters, however, were no doubt intended merely to embody the ideal of perfect sisterly affection, and external resemblances to real people, though such might easily be fancied, were probably far from the author's purpose.

For the rest, the great charm of 'The Pirate' lies in the expression of the novelist's enthusiasm for the fresh and fascinating scenery of a wild country, where strange weird tales are wafted on every breeze, where the quaint customs of past ages are still retained, where Nature reveals herself in a constant succession of new and ever captivating forms, where the rush of the wind and the roar of the sea impart fresh joys to the senses and fill one's soul with renewed veneration for the Power that rules the elements.

As we sailed away for Aberdeen, it was with very much the same feeling which Scott expressed at the close of his diary of the vacation of 1814.[1] He said he had taken

[1] The diary, containing a full account of the visit of 1814, in a lighthouse yacht, to the Shetland and Orkney Islands, the Hebrides, and the northern coasts of Scotland and Ireland, is printed in full in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*.

STROMNESS, ORKNEY

as much pleasure in the excursion as in any six weeks of his life. 'The Pirate' was not written until seven years later, but it carries as much freshness and enthusiasm as though it had been composed on the return voyage.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL

HITHERTO our exploration of the Scott country had revealed a never-ending succession of ruined castles, palaces, and abbeys; of picturesque rivers, lakes, cataracts, and quiet pools; of seashores where thunderous waves dashed against precipitous cliffs; of quaint villages and queer-looking dwelling-houses; of weird caverns and strange monuments suggesting the superstitions and fantasies of bygone ages; of pleasant meadows, wild moors, rounded hilltops, and rugged mountains; of a thousand tangible objects of interest which had in some way suggested to Sir Walter the theme for a poem or story. But when we reached Scott's London, the camera, which had faithfully recorded all the other scenes, refused to perform its function. The tangibleness of the subjects had ceased. My lenses have excellent physical eyes but no historical insight. They insist upon seeing things as they are and will not record them as they once existed. The London of Nigel Olifaunt has completely disappeared and in its place a new London has arisen. To photograph the city of to-day as the scenes of Nigel's adventures, would be like painting the 'Purchase of Manhattan Island from the Indians' with a background of fifty-story 'sky-scrapers.' From such a task my faithful camera shrank, and I was obliged to lay it aside, to turn over, for several days, the pages of

some huge piles of books on Old London in the British Museum.

Lockhart, who places 'The Fortunes of Nigel' in the first class of Scott's romances, says that his historical portrait of King James I 'stands forth preëminent and almost alone.' This, indeed, is the whole object of the book, — to picture the London of King James and the personal peculiarities of that monarch. Scott was thoroughly saturated — so to speak — with the history and literature of that period, and especially with the dramas of Ben Jonson and his contemporaries; and this enabled him to picture the manners of the time almost as if they were within his personal recollection.

It is an amusing portrait of a pompous, strutting, and absurd monarch who yet possessed enough learning, as well as ready wit, to gain the title of 'the wisest fool in Christendom.' Through his famous tutor at Stirling Castle, George Buchanan, who freely boxed the royal ears and administered spankings the same as to other boys, the King had early acquired a certain taste for learning. He evinced a fondness for the classics and yearned to become a poet. He wrote in verse a paraphrase of the Revelation of St. John and a version of the Psalms, besides prose disquisitions on every conceivable subject. His conversation, as described by Scott, was a curious compound of Latin, Greek, English, and the broad Scotch dialect. His tastes, as well as character, were suggested by the appearance of a table in the palace, which, says the novelist, 'was loaded with huge folios, amongst which lay light books of jest and ribaldry; and, amongst notes of unmercifully long orations, and essays on kingcraft, were mingled miserable roundels

and ballads by the Royal 'Prentice, as he styled himself, in the art of poetry, and schemes for the general pacification of Europe, with a list of the names of the King's hounds, and remedies against canine madness.'

A man of medium height and somewhat corpulent, James managed to make his figure seem absurdly fat and clumsy, by having his green velvet dress quilted, so as to be dagger-proof, for he was both timid and cowardly. The ungainly protuberance thus artificially acquired was accentuated by a pair of weak legs, which caused him to roll about rather than walk, and to lean on other men's shoulders when standing. 'He was fond of his dignity while he was perpetually degrading it by undue familiarity; capable of much public labour, yet often neglecting it for the meanest amusement; a wit, though a pedant; and a scholar, though fond of the conversation of the ignorant and uneducated.'

Contrasting strongly with this weak and ludicrous character, Scott introduced the sterling qualities of a noble Scotchman, George Heriot, to whom Edinburgh is indebted for one of her most splendid benevolent institutions, Heriot's Hospital, where for nearly three centuries the poor fatherless boys of the city have been transformed into eminent and useful citizens, honoured and respected in many parts of the world. George Heriot, nicknamed by the King 'Jingling Geordie,' was the son of an Edinburgh goldsmith, to whose business he succeeded. At thirty-six years of age he had the good fortune to be appointed goldsmith to Queen Anne, and shortly after, goldsmith and jeweller to her husband, then James VI of Scotland. On his accession to the English throne as James I, in 1603, Heriot followed the King

## Sketch Map of

# London

Showing the localities referred to in
"The Fortunes of Nigel"
"Peveril of the Peak"
and "Kenilworth"

to London. In those times, and until the eighteenth century, goldsmiths commonly acted as bankers. Heriot made full use of his unusual opportunity and laid the foundation of a large fortune. Disheartened by the loss of his young and beautiful wife, who died at the age of twenty-one, Heriot made a will leaving his entire property, amounting to £23,625, for the establishment of the hospital. His picture is thus described in a quotation copied by Scott in one of his notes: 'His fair hair, which overshades the thoughtful brow and calm, calculating eye, with the cast of humour on the lower part of the countenance, are all indicative of the genuine Scottish character, and well distinguish a person fitted to move steadily and wisely through the world, with a strength of resolution to ensure success and a disposition to enjoy it.'

The weakness of James is still further accentuated in the novel by the introduction of his imperious favourite, George Villiers, the first Duke of Buckingham, whom the King called 'Steenie,' from his fancied resemblance to the portrait of the martyr, Stephen, as painted by the Italian artists. 'James endured his domination rather from habit, timidity, and a dread of encountering his stormy passions, than from any heartfelt continuation of regard towards him.' The King's favour, nevertheless, made Buckingham the richest nobleman in England (with possibly a single exception) and the virtual ruler of the kingdom. The constant companion of the Duke was Baby Charles, as James insisted upon calling his son, afterward King Charles I, for whose ruin and death on the scaffold James was himself, all unconsciously, rapidly paving the way. David Ramsay, the whimsical

and absent-minded watchmaker, who kept shop in Fleet Street, near Temple Bar, was a real character, who held the post of 'watchmaker and horologer' to James I. His most famous performance was a search for hidden treasure in the cloister of Westminster Abbey, by the use of Mosaic rods, or divining rods, which, according to the current account, failed solely because of the presence of too many people. The irreverent laughter of these persons caused a fierce wind to spring up so suddenly that 'the demons had to be dismissed' for fear the church would fall in on them.

These are the real characters of the story. To identify the scenes a good map of Old London, will accomplish more than a personal visit. Such a map need only follow the windings of the Thames, which for centuries was the great silent highway of London, — a distinction which it did not lose until the beginning of the nineteenth century. Over the highway passed the royal barge of Elizabeth, as described in 'Kenilworth,' and it was by this same method of travelling that George Heriot conducted his young friend, Nigel, to the presence of the King at Whitehall. For the streets of the city were narrow and crowded, and rioting, as the result of debauchery and licentiousness, was not infrequent, so that few cared to ride on horseback, and carriages, except for the high nobility, were entirely unknown. So the Thames was the one great artery through which flowed both the business and social life of the city.

When King George and Queen Mary, at the recent coronation, passing through the Admiralty Arch in Trafalgar Square, turned into Whitehall on their way to Westminster Abbey, their route lay between great

rows of government buildings, lined with thousands of cheering subjects. Had conditions remained as they were in King James's time, this part of the triumphal procession would have been entirely within the limits of their own royal palace.

Whitehall Palace, originally built in 1240, was for three centuries called York House, or York Place, taking its name from the fact that it was the London residence of the Archbishop of York. Under Cardinal Wolsey it was rebuilt and refurnished in a style of magnificence excelling anything ever before known in England and equal in splendour to the best in the palaces of the kings. With the fall of Wolsey in 1529 the mansion became the property of King Henry VIII, who changed the name to Whitehall, and proceeded to enlarge and improve both the palace and the grounds. A plan published in 1680 shows that the buildings, with their courtyards and areas, then covered twenty-three acres. It included a cock-pit and a tennis-court, on the site of the present Treasury buildings, and the Horse-Guards Parade was then a tilt-yard. These arrangements sufficiently suggest some of the favourite amusements of royalty. Henry VIII took great delight in cock-fighting and James I amused himself with it regularly twice a week. Queen Elizabeth found pleasure in tournaments and pageants, and it is recorded that in the sixty-seventh year of her age she 'commanded the bear, the bull, and the ape to be bayted in the Tilt-yard.'[1]

King James I found the palace in bad repair and determined to rebuild it on a vast and magnificent scale.

[1] Quoted from Sydney's 'State Papers,' in *The Old Royal Palace of Whitehall*, by Edgar Sheppard, D.D.

Inigo Jones, one of the most famous architects of his time, was employed and made plans for a building, which, if completed, would have covered an area of twenty-four acres. Judging from drawings now in the British Museum, it seems a pity that this admirable project was never fully executed. Only the banqueting-hall was finished, and this still remains as the sole survivor of the Palace of Whitehall. Its chief historical interest lies in the fact that, from one of its windows, Charles I stepped out upon the scaffold where he was beheaded.

If we were to follow ancient custom and use the Thames for our highway, as did two hundred peers and peeresses at the late coronation, we should now row down the river and land at Charing Cross Pier, where we should find the remnant of the sumptuous palace built by 'Steenie,' the Duke of Buckingham. This is the York Water Gate, formerly the entrance to the Duke's mansion from the Thames, but now high above the water, overlooking the garden of the Victoria Embankment.

Continuing down the river, we should stop at Temple Pier, and visit the Temple Gardens, where Nigel walked in despair, after his encounter with Lord Dalgarno in St. James's Park, and where, it will be remembered, he fell in with the friendly Templar, Reginald Lowestoffe. The Temple property was granted in 1609 by James I to the benchers of the Inner and Middle Temple for the education of students and professors of the law. Oliver Goldsmith lived in Middle Temple Lane, and in the same house, Sir William Blackstone, the great English jurist, and William Makepeace Thackeray, also had chambers.

Dr. Johnson lived in Inner Temple Lane, as did Charles Lamb, who was born within the Temple.

Coming out into Fleet Street, we should stand before the figure of a griffin on a high pedestal, which marks the site of Temple Bar. In Scott's time it was an arch crossing the street, and in the time of King James, merely a barricade of posts and chains. When the coronation procession passed this point, King George V, according to ancient custom, paused to receive permission from the Lord Mayor to enter the City of London. The civic sword was presented to the King and immediately returned to the Lord Mayor, after which the procession resumed its march.

Within Temple Bar and on the north side of Fleet Street, between Fetter Lane and Chancery Lane, is St. Dunstan's Church, built in 1832 on the site of an older church building. A few yards to the eastward, according to Scott, was the shop of David Ramsay, the watchmaker, before which the two 'stout-bodied and strong-voiced' apprentices kept up the shouts of 'What d' ye lack? what d' ye lack?' — very much after the fashion of a modern 'barker.' This was the opening scene of the novel, though not suggested in the slightest by the Fleet Street of to-day.

On the opposite side a narrow lane, called Bouverie Street, leads down toward the river along the eastern boundary of The Temple, into 'Whitefriars,' or Alsatia, where Nigel was compelled to take refuge for a time in the house of the old miser, Trapbois. The 'Friars of the Blessed Virgin of Mount Carmel,' otherwise known as the 'White Friars,' established their London house in 1241, between Fleet Street and the Thames, on land

granted by Edward I. This carried with it the privileges of sanctuary or immunity from arrest, which were allowed to the inhabitants long after the dissolution of the religious houses. Indeed, before the suppression of the monastery, the persons of bad repute, who had flocked to the district in great numbers, were wont to make so much disturbance with their continual clamours and outcries, that the friars complained that they could not conduct divine service. The privilege was confirmed by James I, and in his time, as a consequence, 'Alsatia,' as the district came to be called, was one of the worst quarters in London. It was the common habitation of thieves, gamblers, swindlers, murderers, bullies, and drunken, dissipated reprobates of both sexes. Its atmosphere, thick with the fogs of the river, fairly reeked with the smell of alehouses of the lowest order, which outnumbered all the other houses. The shouts of rioters, the profane songs and boisterous laughter of the revellers, mingled with the wailing of children and the screaming of women. The men were 'shaggy, uncombed ruffians whose enormous mustaches were turned back over their ears,' and they swaggered through the dirty streets, quarrelling, brawling, fighting, swearing, and 'smoking like moving volcanoes.' They waged a ceaseless warfare against their proud and noisy, but not so disreputable, neighbours of The Temple.

Coming back to our imaginary trip by river (for we really visited these sites either on foot or by taxicab), we continue down the river, passing under Blackfriars Bridge, and stop for a moment at Paul's Wharf, near where Nigel found quarters in the house of John Christie, the honest ship-chandler. Journeying on-

ward, we pass under London Bridge, which in James's time was the only means of crossing the river, other than by boat. It was then overloaded with a great weight of huge buildings, many stories high, under which passed a narrow roadway. At the southern entrance was a gate, the top of which was decorated with the heads of traitors. All the buildings were finally cleared away in 1757 and 1758.

Passing under London Bridge we soon come to the Tower of London, which the unfortunate Nigel entered through the Traitor's Gate. From the time of William the Conqueror, by whom its foundations were begun, until the reign of Charles II, the Tower of London was used as a palace by the kings of England. It has been said that the 'strong monarchs employed the Tower as a prison, the weak ones as a fortress.' It was as a prison that the Tower achieved its unenviable fame in history as

> London's lasting shame;
> With many a foul and midnight murder fed.

In its dark precincts many of the noblest of England's men and women found themselves prisoners, the majority of them perishing upon the block. Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard, wives of Henry VIII; Lady Jane Grey and her husband Guildford Dudley; the father [1] and the grandfather [2] of Dudley; and Sir Walter Raleigh were among the most famous of these victims. Nigel was confined in the Beauchamp Tower, where many distinguished persons were imprisoned. The inscriptions to which Scott refers may still be seen, including that

[1] John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland.
[2] Edmund Dudley, the notorious agent of King Henry VII.

of Lady Jane Grey, though it is probable that this was written by her husband or by his brother, who is supposed to have carved the device of the bear and ragged staff, 'the emblem of the proud Dudleys,' which is an elaborate piece of sculpture on the right of the fireplace.

To complete our survey of the scenery of 'The Fortunes of Nigel,' we have to continue our journey down the Thames until we land in Greenwich Hospital and the Royal Naval College, which occupy the site of the old royal palace, formerly called Placentia or Pleasaunce. It was a favourite royal palace as early as 1300, though it passed into the hands of the nobility and came back to the Crown in 1433 on the death of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. It was the birthplace of King Henry VIII and of Mary and Elizabeth. The building was enlarged by Henry VIII, James I, and Charles I. Charles II caused it to be pulled down, intending to carry out some ambitious plan, but succeeded in erecting only the building which is now the west wing of the hospital. Back of the palace is an extensive park of one hundred and ninety acres. This is where Nigel unexpectedly encountered the King, at the very climax of a stag-hunt, frightening him nearly to death; and here he was unceremoniously arrested and hurried off to the Tower. The park still has herds of deer, though they are no longer hunted, and a row of fine old chestnuts, originally planted by command of Charles II, who laid out the enclosure. In the centre is a hill, surmounted by the famous Royal Greenwich Observatory, from whose meridian longitude is reckoned and whose clock determines the standard of time for all England.

Just as 'The Heart of Midlothian' had produced

a vivid picture of life in Edinburgh during the reign of George II, so 'The Fortunes of Nigel' reproduced the life of London in the time of King James. For this brilliant study, not only of the curious monarch, but of the strange manners and customs as well as the lawlessness of the city, which the King's folly did so much to create, the novel has been generally accorded a very high rank among Scott's productions.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### PEVERIL OF THE PEAK

'Old Peveril' was one of the pet nicknames with which Scott was dubbed by some of his young legal friends in Parliament House, and he carried the sobriquet for the remainder of his life, taking great delight in it. He did not, however, take much pleasure from the composition of the novel, finding it a tiresome task from which he could only find relief by planning its successor. It marks the beginning of a malady which ultimately proved fatal. Scott concealed the symptoms from his family, but confided to a friend that he feared Peveril 'will smell of the apoplexy.' It proved a heavy undertaking, covering a period of twenty years of exciting history and three distinct, but widely differing, localities, namely, Derbyshire, the Isle of Man, and London in the time of Charles II.

In the high Peak country of Derbyshire, about fifteen miles west of Sheffield, lies the village of Castleton, nestling snugly at the foot of a somewhat precipitous hill. Away back in the time of William the Conqueror, a son of that monarch received a grant of large estates in Derbyshire, and selected the very summit of this steep and almost inaccessible rock as the site of his castle. His name was William Peveril and the bit of a ruin which still remains, high in the air above the village, is called Peveril Castle. We reached it after a very hard climb, by a steep path running zigzag across the face of a long

grassy slope. It was scarcely worth the effort, for the 'castle' is now only a small square tower, of no interest whatever, except from the fact that it gave the name to one of the Waverley Novels.

The domain of this William Peveril seems to have extended far to the south of Castleton, and included in it was the site of Haddon Hall, a fine mediæval mansion, picturesquely situated on the river Wye, between Bakewell and Rowsley, and still in wonderfully good repair. The Peverils held the property for about a century, when they were deprived of the lands by King Henry II. In 1195, Haddon came into the possession of the Vernon family, who continued to reside there for nearly four centuries. The last of the name was Sir George Vernon, who became celebrated as the 'King of the Peak.' His large possessions passed into the hands of his youngest daughter, Dorothy, whose elopement and marriage with John Manners, youngest son of the Earl of Rutland, threw about the old mansion that atmosphere of poetry and romance which has ever since been associated with it. To me, the most pleasing part of the old hall is the terrace and lawn, back of the house. A flight of broad stairs, with stone balustrades, leads to Dorothy Vernon's Walk, which is shaded by the thick foliage of oaks, limes, sycamores, and other forest trees, for which the park was once famous. Grassy mounds mark the boundaries of the lawn, and the castle walls, with their wide windows and luxurious mantle of deep green ivy, add a delightful charm to the picture. This is further enhanced by the romantic associations of the place. Traditions say that John Manners, who, for some reason, was forbidden the opportunity to

visit the fair Dorothy openly, hovered about these terraces disguised as a forester, seeking brief interviews in secret. On the night of a ball in celebration of her sister's wedding, Dorothy slipped into the garden, and passing through the terrace made her way across the Wye over a quaint little bridge, built just large enough for a single pack-horse, and now known as the 'Pack-Horse Bridge.' On the other side, John waited with horses, and the two rode away to be married. Whatever may have been the objection to the marriage, events soon adjusted the affair and Dorothy Vernon became the sole owner of the mansion. It has remained ever since in the possession of the Manners family, the Earls and Dukes of Rutland.

In his description of Martindale Castle, the seat of Sir Geoffrey Peveril, Scott doubtless had in mind, to some extent at least, this more pretentious mansion on the original property of the Peverils, rather than the uninteresting tower at Castleton. He refers to Haddon Hall in one of his notes as having suggested a certain arrangement of rooms, and in his account of Lady Peveril's dinner to the Cavaliers and Roundheads, in honour of the restoration of King Charles II, he makes use of two large dining-rooms, which Haddon Hall could readily supply, but which might be difficult to find in any ordinary mansion of the period.

Lady Peveril, it will be remembered, in spite of the 'good fellowship' and 'reconciliation' which the banquet was to celebrate, dared not permit the rival factions to dine together, so she adopted the unique expedient of placing the jovial Cavaliers in the hall, while the strict Puritans occupied the large parlour. The great hall of

THE PACK-HORSE BRIDGE, HADDON HALL

Haddon is about thirty-five feet long and twenty-five feet wide. At one end is an ancient table, many centuries old, and at the other is a minstrel's gallery, with carved panellings and ornamented by stag's heads. A great open fireplace gives a suggestion of good cheer, even to the bare room. Back of this is another large dining-room on the oaken walls of which are some fine old carvings. It also has a large open fireplace, above which is the motto

*Drede God and Honor the Kyng.*

The room was formerly larger than now and may have been in the author's mind as the scene of the Puritan part of the banquet. Haddon Hall, however, although it doubtless furnished some few suggestions, must not be taken as an 'original' of Martindale Castle. The novelist never felt the necessity of an exact model, but freely used the places with which he was familiar for such suggestions as they might chance to furnish. In his later work he often described localities which he had never visited, frequently doing so with an exactness suggesting the most intimate personal knowledge.

This was true of the Isle of Man, which Scott had never seen, but which he describes in 'Peveril of the Peak' with great accuracy, relying for his information upon Waldron's 'Description of the Isle of Man,' published in 1731.

After an interval of several years following the events in Derbyshire, Julian Peveril appears as a visitor at Castle Rushen, in the southern end of the Isle of Man. Tradition says that this ancient castle was founded in the tenth century by Guttred, the son of a Norwegian

chief named Orry, who took possession and with his sons and successors reigned for many years as kings of the Isle of Man. Later the Earls of Derby ruled as monarchs of the island and Castle Rushen was their royal residence.

The traditional castle of the Norwegians was replaced in the thirteenth century by a strong fortress of limestone. This was partly destroyed by Robert Bruce in 1313 and remained in ruins for three centuries. It was then rebuilt by the Earls of Derby in its present form. The central keep is a strong tower with walls twenty-two feet thick at the base and about seventy feet high. It is surrounded by an embattled wall twenty-five feet high and nine feet thick. On the tower facing the market square is a clock presented in 1597 by Queen Elizabeth.

In 1627, James Stanley, celebrated as 'the great Earl of Derby,' became lord of the island. This nobleman was executed in 1651, charged with the crime of assisting Charles II before the battle of Worcester. During his absence in England the Castle Rushen was heroically defended by his wife, the brave Charlotte de la Tremouille, Countess of Derby. William Christian, popularly known as William Dhône, or 'the fair-haired William,' had been entrusted by the Earl with the care of his wife and children. Whatever may have been his motive, the Receiver-General, by which title Christian was known, surrendered the island without resistance, on the appearance of the Parliamentary army, and the Countess was imprisoned in the castle. After the Restoration of Charles II, the Countess accused Christian of treachery to herself and brought about his execution in 1662.

These were the main facts which, coming to the novelist's attention through his brother, Thomas Scott, who for several seasons resided in the Isle of Man, attracted his fancy and suggested the writing of 'Peveril of the Peak.'

Peel Castle, to which the action of the story is soon transferred, stands on a rocky islet off the western coast of the island. It was once a vast ecclesiastical establishment and now contains the ruins of two churches, two chapels, two prisons, and two palaces. Of these the best preserved and most interesting is the Cathedral of St. Germain, a cruciform building, some parts of which were built in the thirteenth century. In a crypt below was the ecclesiastical prison where many remarkable captives were confined, the most notable of whom was Eleanor Cobham, wife of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, who was accused of witchcraft and of devising a wicked plot to kill the King and place her husband upon the throne.

Higher up on the rock are the remains of St. Patrick's Church, in the walls of which are some good examples of the 'herring-bone' masonry indicating great antiquity. The walls are thought by antiquarians to date back to the fifth century. Behind this is the remarkable round tower, about fifty feet high, which Mr. Hall Caine has introduced in 'The Christian.'

The custodian, when he learned of our interest in Sir Walter Scott, could scarcely restrain his anxiety to show us Fenella's Tower. This is a bit of the surrounding wall, containing a small square turret. Beneath is a narrow stairway, forming a sally-port, through which entrance could be gained to a space between two par-

allel outside walls. In time of siege, soldiers could go out and fire at the enemy from this place of concealment through openings in the walls. If hard-pressed they could retire to the tower and pour scalding water or hot lead upon an attacking body. In Scott's tale, Julian Peveril, seeking to leave the castle by this stair, is intercepted by Fenella, who is anxious to prevent his departure. Finally eluding her grasp, he hastens down the stair only to be confronted again by the deaf-and-dumb maiden, who has accomplished her purpose by leaping over the parapet. We gazed down from the walls upon a ledge of rocks at least fifteen feet below and concluded that, for a little girl, this was a pretty big leap!

The keep and guard-house near the entrance was the scene of the Manx legend of the Moddey Dhoo, a large black spaniel with shaggy hair, which haunted Peel Castle. This dog is referred to in 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel':

> For he was speechless, ghastly, wan,
> Like him of whom the story ran
> Who spoke the spectre-hound in Man.

The Moddey Dhoo was the terror of all the soldiers on the island, who believed he was an evil spirit, only awaiting an opportunity to do them harm. At length, a drunken soldier declared he would find out whether the animal were dog or devil. He departed bravely, with much noise and boasting, but none dared follow. When he returned the fellow was sober and silent. He never spoke again, but three days later died in agony.

The remaining scenery of 'Peveril of the Peak' is London in the time of Charles II. The 'dark and shadowy' city had now attracted nearly all the personages of

THE SAXON TOWER, ISLE OF MAN

the story. In St. James's Park, adjoining the Palace of Whitehall, Fenella danced with wondrous grace and agility before the King. As in 'The Fortunes of Nigel,' the Thames is the great highway of traffic, and Julian Peveril is carried by coach to the river from old Newgate Prison, and thence by boat to the Tower, which, like Nigel, he enters through the Traitor's Gate.

The Savoy, a dilapidated old pile, where Julian unexpectedly meets Fenella, was once a great palace. It was built by Simon de Montfort, the great Earl of Leicester, in 1245. In the following century it was almost demolished by a mob, but in 1509 King Henry VII restored and rebuilt the palace and converted it into a hospital. Half a century later, Queen Mary refounded and reëndowed the institution. In the time of the story the building was probably not so antiquated and ruinous as Scott describes it. Charles II, after the Restoration, used it as the meeting-place of the Savoy conference for the revision of the Liturgy. In Scott's time it was ruinous enough and since then has entirely disappeared. Westminster Hall, where the trial of the Peverils was held, is now the vestibule of the Houses of Parliament. It was originally built by William Rufus, son of the Conqueror, in 1097, but afterward destroyed by fire and rebuilt. In it some of the earliest English Parliaments were held and it has been the scene of many coronation festivals.

The novel gives a graphic picture of the gay, dissipated, and scandalous court of Charles II, and an excellent portrait of that selfish, indolent, and sensual, but witty and good-natured monarch. His chief favourite, George Villiers, the second Duke of Buckingham, is painted in no more flattering colours. He was a statesman of fickle

character who could not long be trusted by any one. He was a writer of verses, farces, and comedies, a musician, and a man of great talent and accomplishments; but he was a profligate, absolutely insincere and without principle.

'Peveril of the Peak' cannot be considered one of Scott's best novels. It has never been popular. Scott himself tired of it, and even Lockhart can find little to say in its praise.

Lady Louisa Stuart, who was one of Scott's most valued friends, summarized it all, at the end of a good-natured criticism, with the remark: 'However, in all this I recognize the old habit of a friend of mine, growing tired before any of his readers, huddling up a conclusion anyhow, and so kicking the book out of his way; which is a provoking trick, though one must bear it rather than not *have* his book, with all its faults on its head. The best amends he can make is to give us another as soon as may be.'

## CHAPTER XXIV

### QUENTIN DURWARD

The true 'Scott Country' is limited strictly to Scotland, England, and Wales. So long as he remained upon the soil of his own native kingdom, Sir Walter wrote of what he had seen and for the most part traversed only familiar ground. In Scotland, he was equally at home in the Lowlands or Highlands. He visited England often enough to know well the inspiring mountains of Cumberland and Westmoreland, the hills and valleys of Northumberland, the broad expanse of Yorkshire, with its delightful scenery and many historical associations, the moorlands of Derby, the charming roads and pleasant villages of Nottingham, Leicester, Warwick, and Oxford, and the highways and by-ways of the ever-fascinating London. With the history, the legends and the poetry of his own country he was as familiar as a child would be with the environment of his own home. They were a part of the mental equipment that had been developing steadily from the time he was three years old.

When he stepped out of this familiar region, for the first time, there came a remarkable change, and in January, 1823, when he began the composition of 'Quentin Durward,' we find him floundering about in a sea of gazetteers, atlases, histories, and geographies. On the 23d of that month he wrote to Constable: — 'It is a vile place, this village of Plessis les Tours, that can baffle

both you and me. It is a place famous in history . . . yet I have not found it in any map, provincial or general, which I have consulted. . . . Instead of description holding the place of sense, I must try to make such sense as I can find, hold the place of description.'

Fortunately he had the assistance of his friend Skene, who about this time returned from a tour in France, and placed at the disposal of the author a great variety of sketches of landscapes and ancient buildings, besides a journal full of accurate notes; for the novelist's artist-friend knew from long companionship exactly what would be most appreciated.

Though a stranger in a strange land, Scott was not entirely alone, for he took with him into the unknown country three good Scotchmen, namely, Quentin Durward, whom he made an archer in the Scots Guard of King Louis XI; the picturesque and interesting Le Balafré, Quentin's uncle, already a guardsman; and Lord Crawford, the aged commander of the guard, a Scotch nobleman, whose great ability and experience had won the esteem and confidence even of the suspicious King. This was surely a stroke of genius. The old Scotch friends of the novelist could not help following with interest the thrilling adventures of their countrymen in a foreign land, while, on the other hand, the tale raised up a host of new admirers in France and throughout the Continent. The Frenchmen saw with amazement King Louis XI and Charles the Bold suddenly come to life and, under the skilful direction of the Scottish Wizard, walk about again amidst some of the most stirring scenes of European history. Not in all their literature had the French people seen such striking por-

traiture of these famous men nor such vivid pictures of the ancient manners of their own people.

A line, nearly straight, drawn diagonally across the map of France and Belgium, representing a distance of perhaps three hundred and fifty miles, will fairly suggest the geography of 'Quentin Durward.' Its southwestern extremity would be Tours, about one hundred and forty-five miles from Paris. It would pass through Péronne, in the north of France directly east of Amiens; then dropping slightly to the south, and across the border of Belgium would reach its northeastern termination in the city of Liège.

The town of Tours was much favoured in the fifteenth century by the frequent visits of Charles VII, Louis XI, and Charles VIII, in consequence of which it then reached its highest state of prosperity. It was long famed for its silk industry, founded by Louis XI. Two miles west of the town, on a low marshy plain between the rivers Loire and Cher, and close by a hamlet of a few scattered cottages, is the famous Castle of Plessis les Tours, where the action of the story begins. Only a fragment of the original structure now remains, as part of a modern château.

The old castle looked more like a prison than a king's palace, and seemed well adapted to be the den of the 'universal spider,' as Louis came to be called, from which he could weave his dangerous web in every direction and ensnare the feet of those whom he selected for his prey. It was in this dismal place that Louis XI shut himself in the last days of his life, weak from illness and pain and almost insane from distrust. Here he died, in 1483, to the great joy of the kingdom.

Every year he had added new walls and ditches to his fortress. The towers were covered with iron as a protection against arrows. Eighteen hundred heavy planks bristling with nails were placed outside the ditches to impede the approach of cavalry. Four hundred crossbowmen manned the towers and the villainous Tristan l'Hermite had full authority to seize and hang any innocent stranger whom he might choose to suspect.

As I write, I have before me two pictures: — one a contemporary print of the ancient castle, the other a portrait of the King. The former, a group of low, irregular buildings, with slanting roofs and small barred windows, having a chapel attached to one end, contains nothing whatever to suggest a royal palace. The latter shows the face of a sly, cunning, unscrupulous plotter, full of cruelty, baseness, vulgarity, and hypocrisy, yet terribly in earnest and revealing the features that mark an irresistible will. I can almost fancy a resemblance between the two pictures. The mean unpretentiousness of the castle and its lack of symmetry suggest the unprepossessing appearance of the King, whose whole aspect was vulgar, his clothing purposely plain and often untidy and his manners completely devoid of dignity and common courtesy. Its numerous defences, including turrets, battlements, ditches, and drawbridges, suggest the constant fear of treachery in which the King lived, never daring to regard his most intimate companions with aught but jealous suspicion. The real strength of the fortress, in spite of its ugliness and apparent insignificance are typical of the tremendous power of this monarch, who pursued his purposes without regard to truth, decency, honour, or human rights, reducing the

people to a state of abject poverty and misery, yet enlarging the borders of France to nearly their present extent, reorganizing the army, centralizing the government, and laying the foundations of the nation in its modern form.

One might almost indulge the whimsical notion that the little chapel to which I have referred, pointing heavenward with an attenuated spire of absurdly slender proportions, symbolizes the King's own feeble efforts to point in the same direction. His piety was manifested by a dozen 'paltry figures of saints stamped in lead' which he wore on the band of his hat. He endeavoured to atone for the most atrocious acts of selfishness and cruelty by gifts of money and outward penance, continuing his wickedness all the while, but apologizing for it in his prayers to the saints. But the crowning act of hypocritical piety, as well as the most absurd, was his attempt to insure his ultimate salvation by the unique expedient of creating the Virgin Mary a countess and an honorary colonel of his guards.

This was the strange, but intensely interesting, character, whom Scott, making free use of the 'Memoirs of Philippe de Comines,' one of the King's most intimate councillors, succeeded in portraying so vividly that the tale of which he is the real hero has won universal recognition as a novel of genuine historical value.

A few miles southeast of Tours is the ruin of a castle still more terrible in its suggestiveness than even Plessis, for here Louis XI perpetrated deeds of secret cruelty, which he shrank from committing within the walls of his own palace. It is the Castle of Loches, for many years a royal residence. It is interesting to Scotchmen from

the fact that it was the scene of the royal wedding of King James V to the Princess Magdalene, in whose honour the Palace of Linlithgow was remodelled and greatly embellished.

The castle is now a pile of ruined buildings, standing on the summit of a lofty rock, where it dominates the landscape. Its principal tower is one hundred and twenty feet high, with walls eight feet thick. Its date is said to be the twelfth century. A part of it is now the local jail, and the building has been used as a prison for centuries. Beneath were dungeons under dungeons, dimly lighted by narrow windows, cut through small recesses in the walls, which are here ten or twelve feet thick. In two of these were the iron cages invented by Cardinal John de La Balue. He was a cobbler, some say a tailor, whom Louis elevated to the highest rank and employed in his secret devices. The cage was built of iron bars and was only eight feet square. The Cardinal proved a traitor to his king and the latter's severity kept him in the dungeon cells for eleven years, a part of which time, at least, was spent in one of the cages of his own invention. The governor and gaoler of this dreaded prison was Oliver le Daim, the King's barber and prime minister.

The events culminating in the murder of the Bishop of Liège were, of course, purely fictitious. Scott did not hesitate to 'violate history,' as he afterward expressed it, to meet the requirements of his story. The actual murder of the Bishop occurred in 1482, fourteen years after the period of the novel and five years after the death of Charles the Bold. William de la Marck, called the 'Wild Boar of Ardennes,' wishing to place the mitre

on the head of his own son, entered into a conspiracy with some of the rebellious citizens of Liège, against their Bishop, Louis de Bourbon. The latter was enticed to the edge of the town, where he was met by the fierce and bloodthirsty knight, who murdered him with his own hand and caused the body to be exposed naked in St. Lambert's Place, before the cathedral. Scott's version, never intended to be historically accurate, places the scene of the murder in the fictitious Castle of Schonwaldt, outside the city.

The description of the meeting of Louis XI and Charles the Bold at the town of Péronne and the King's imprisonment in the castle, while somewhat amplified with fictitious details, is in the essential facts quite in accord with history. Péronne is a small town of great antiquity, ninety-four miles northeast of Paris, in the Department of the Somme. Its castle still retains four conical-roofed towers in fairly good repair. On the ground floor are many dark and dismal dungeons. In one of these miserable cells Charles the Simple, in the year 929, ended his days in agony. He was confined in the tower by the treachery of Herbert, Count of Vermandois, and left there to starve to death. Adjoining this room, in what is known as the Tour Herbert, is the chamber said to have been occupied by Louis XI.

Great was the surprise and alarm among the retainers of Louis when that monarch, trusting to an exaggerated notion of his own wit and powers of persuasion, proposed to visit his most formidable adversary, Charles of Burgundy, at the town of Péronne. The latter granted the King's request for a safe-conduct, and Louis set forth in October, 1482, accompanied by a small detach-

ment of his Scots Guard and men-at-arms, and two faithless councillors, the Constable de St. Pol and the Cardinal de La Balue. The Duke met the King outside the town and together they walked in apparent friendliness to the house of the Chamberlain, Charles apologizing for not taking the King to the castle because it was not in fit condition. Some portion of the Duke's army arrived the same day and encamped outside the walls. Learning this, the King became greatly frightened and demanded quarters in the castle — a request which Charles granted with great, but secret, glee. The next day brought forth nothing but ill-feeling and misunderstanding, which was brought to a climax by the news from Liège. It was reported that the emissaries of Louis had stirred up sedition against the Duke, and had killed the Bishop of Liège, and the Lord of Humbercourt. Charles was a man of tremendous passions and this news threw him into a fury which he made little attempt to control. His royal guest became his prisoner, the gates of the town and the castle were closed, and for a time Louis was in danger of his life at the hands of his enraged vassal. Louis, meanwhile, remained calm, making full use of his native shrewdness, keenness of penetration, and unusual cunning. By a liberal use of money, with which he had sagaciously provided himself, the Duke's servants were corrupted wherever he could hope to secure information or assistance. His craftiness, however, proved unnecessary. Charles cooled off after a day or two and realized that he could not well afford to violate his safe-conduct. Meanwhile the news from Liège turned out more favourably. The Bishop had not been slain and the revolt had been less serious than

supposed. Charles, however, compelled the King to swear a new treaty, which Louis did by taking from one of his boxes a piece of the 'true cross,' a relic, formerly belonging, so it was said, to Charlemagne, which Louis regarded with great veneration. The oath upon the cross duly made, Louis accompanied his captor on an expedition against the town of Liège, the particulars of which were not essentially different from the version of Scott.

The novel brings out to great advantage the striking contrast between the King and the Duke. Charles was strong, vigorous, clear-sighted, and in the words of Philippe de Comines, 'a great and honourable prince, as much esteemed for a time amongst his neighbours as any prince in Christendom.' The great fault of his character was that expressed in the sobriquet, Charles the Rash; and this was the cause of his downfall. That, however, is a tale which Scott reserved for a later novel.

Though received at first with apparent indifference, 'Quentin Durward' came in time to be regarded as one of the best of the Waverley Novels, dividing the honours, in the minds of the boys, at least, with 'Ivanhoe' and 'The Talisman.'

## CHAPTER XXV

### ST. RONAN'S WELL

If, as I have said in the preceding chapter, the true Scott Country comprises the United Kingdom, except Ireland, the inner circle of that country, the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, so to speak, must be considered as including that part of Scotland lying between the Firth of Forth and the English border; or, more strictly, the counties of Edinburgh, Peebles, Selkirk, and Roxburgh. This was Scott's home, his workshop, and his playground. From the spring of 1806 to the early winter of 1830, a period of nearly twenty-five years, he performed the duties of Clerk of the Court of Session. This required his presence in Edinburgh usually from the 12th of May to the 12th of July and from the 12th of November to the 12th of March, excepting an interval at Christmas. This meant from four to six hours' work a day for four or five days each week, extending over about six months of every year. During the sessions of the court his residence was No. 39, North Castle Street, a three-story stone dwelling-house, within sight of Edinburgh Castle.

The day after the rising of the court usually found its distinguished clerk ready to 'escape to the country.' For six years his retreat was the little thatched cottage at Lasswade, in the vale of the Esk. The next eight summers found him at Ashestiel, and after that Abbotsford was the lodestone that drew him from the city. Scott loved the wide sweep of the bare hills, especially

when tinged with the purple hue of the heather. Their pure air was the tonic which had saved his life, when as a child he rolled about on the rocks of Smailholm, a companion of the sheep and lambs. Their streams gave him an opportunity to lure the salmon from their hiding-places. Their rounded summits gave him many a distant view of battle-fields, famed in the Border warfare, which filled up centuries of Scottish and English history. Their pleasant glens and thickets gave him delightful walks in the woods. Their hospitable cottages extended him a never failing welcome, and yielded up to him, from the lips of hundreds of old wives, a treasure of Scottish ballads, songs, and tales of Border chivalry. Their castles and mansions threw open their doors at his approach, rivalling the humbler dwellings in the cordiality of their greeting.

No wonder Scott loved the Border country. 'It may be partiality,' said he to Washington Irving, 'but to my eye, these grey hills and all this wild Border country have beauties peculiar to themselves. I like the very nakedness of the land; it has something bold, and stern, and solitary about it. When I have been for some time in the rich scenery about Edinburgh, which is like ornamented garden land, I begin to wish myself back again among my own honest grey hills; and if I did not see the heather at least once a year, I think I should die!'

It was while riding with Lockhart and Willie Laidlaw, along the brow of the Eildon Hills, looking down upon Melrose, one fine afternoon in July, 1823, that the suggestion came which led eventually to 'St. Ronan's Well.' 'Quentin Durward' had recently appeared and Scott, commenting upon its reception, remarked that he

could probably do something better with a German subject. 'Na, na, sir,' protested Laidlaw, 'take my word for it, you are always best, like Helen MacGregor, when your foot is on your native heath; and I have often thought that if you were to write a novel, and lay the scene *here* in the very year you were writing it, you would exceed yourself.' 'Hame 's hame,' smilingly assented Scott, 'be it ever sae hamely. There's something in what you say, Willie.' Although Laidlaw insisted that his friend should 'stick to Melrose in July, 1823,' Scott took a little broader field and made the scene of 'St. Ronan's Well,' the valley of the Tweed.

This was the country which he had pictured in 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel,' at the very beginning of his fame. He had come back to it for a bit of the scenery of 'The Monastery' and 'The Abbot.' These, however, were romances of an earlier period. He was now for the first time to write of his own country in his own time. The tale was to depict society life, not of the wholesome and genuine kind to which Scott was personally accustomed, whether in Edinburgh or the country, but of the type he had seen at various watering-places and summer resorts which he had visited.

'St. Ronan's Well' may be considered a true picture of this society or a caricature, according to one's own sympathies. Some of its readers have been able to find among their own 'social set,' Lady Penelope Penfeather, Sir Bingo and Lady Binks, Mr. Winterblossom, Dr. Quackleben, and even the 'man of peace,' Captain Mungo MacTurk, and have praised or condemned the author's portraits according to their own predilections toward such personages.

THE TWEED AND EILDON HILLS

Scott saw something of this life at Gilsland in the memorable summer of 1797, the year when he met Miss Carpenter at the dance in Shaw's Hotel. Below the hostelry is a deep and attractive glen, through which flows the river Irthing, and just above the bridge spanning the river, is one of those mineral springs, which have the strange power, whatever may be their medicinal virtues, of drawing hundreds of people away from their homes in the summer months. There is another of these springs at Innerleithen, on the banks of the Tweed, and for this reason — for I can see no other — the people of that town have laid claim to the honour of residing in the original 'St. Ronan's.'

Innerleithen, now a prosperous town of about three thousand inhabitants, is situated amid the hills which border the Tweed in the most picturesque part of its course. In Scott's time it was only a small village. Traquair, on the contrary, a few miles to the south, was of more importance in Scott's time than now, when it is a mere hamlet, remarkable for nothing except the fine old feudal mansion to which I have previously referred.[1] If we are to think of Innerleithen, then, as the 'ancient and decayed village of St. Ronan's' we must picture it, not as the thriving commercial town of to-day, but more like its neighbour on the south.

Of course I felt anxious to taste the waters of the real St. Ronan's Well, and made a journey to Innerleithen for the purpose. I gained nothing beyond the experience of exchanging a good shilling for a bad drink. One taste was enough, and when the girl was n't looking I threw the rest away. I found an old two-story house in the

[1] See *ante*, p. 106, Chapter VIII, 'Waverley.'

town which claims to be the original 'Cleikum Inn' — a claim which is disputed by a public house in Peebles, 'The Cross Keys Hotel,' formerly a pretentious seventeenth-century mansion. The latter was kept in Scott's time by a maiden lady named Marian Ritchie, who seems to have possessed some of the characteristics which the novelist exaggerated in his delightfully humorous picture of Meg Dods. She found fault with the new 'hottle,' and did not hesitate to vent her sarcasm upon those travellers who ventured to stay there in preference to her own respectable inn. Scott, according to local history, was occasionally one of her guests. She ruled with a rod of iron, permitting no excesses, and did not hesitate to send a young man 'hame to his mither' if she suspected him to be imbibing too freely. Scott gave this model landlady the real name of a hostess whom he had patronized when only seventeen years old. It was on a fishing excursion to a loch near Howgate, in the Moorfoot Hills, when Scott and three of his boon companions stopped at a little public-house kept by Mrs. Margaret Dods. It was thirty-five years later when, in writing 'St. Ronan's Well' the novelist adopted the name of the real landlady for his fictitious character.

So far as the rival claimants of the 'Cleikum Inn' honours are concerned, I do not believe that Scott had any particular house in mind, either for the 'inn,' or the 'hottle.' Nor can I find any evidence of the existence of an 'original' for Shaw's Castle, the family seat of the Mowbrays, though Raeburn House, near St. Boswell's Green may be taken as a excellent type. The same doubt applies to the village of St. Ronan's itself. Scott's

design seems to have been merely to place the scene of his story, broadly speaking, in the valley of the Tweed.

This picturesque stream rises in the high lands near Moffat and flows north through a country still wild and solitary. A score of miles or less from its source, it makes a bend toward the east, above the town of Peebles, and from this point, until it discharges its waters into the North Sea at Berwick, there is scarcely a bend in the river or a village or town on its banks that does not suggest memories of Sir Walter Scott.

From the high ground overlooking the river, just at the point where it bends to the east, we had a view, through the trees, of surpassing beauty. Below was the ancient Castle of Neidpath, once a scene of stately splendour, when nobles and monarchs frequented its halls, and richly attired ladies promenaded in the well-kept gardens, laden with the perfume and brilliant with the hues of many flowers; when well-ordered terraces lined the banks of the stream and orchards smiled from the surrounding hillsides. Amid such scenes the 'Maid of Neidpath' sat in the tower, —

To watch her love's returning —

and broke her heart when the lover came and passed with heedless gaze —

As o'er some stranger glancing.[1]

Time and Nature, working together as landscape artists, have converted the castle into a picturesque ruin, and replaced the artificial gardens and terraces with thick groves of fine old trees, clothing the hillsides

[1] *The Maid of Neidpath*, 1806.

with a richer and deeper verdure, and leaving only the river as of yore, still brightening the scene with the sparkle of its silvery tide. In the distance we could see the spires and chimneys of Peebles.

Following the river, we passed Innerleithen, six miles below Peebles, and a short distance beyond we paused for a moment to look toward the ruins of Elibank, high up on the hillside. This was Scott's favourite objective point for a summer afternoon walk from Ashestiel, and the scene of the famous legend of 'Muckle-Mouthed Meg.' [1] Two miles farther on is Ashestiel, where Scott spent many happy summers. Keeping the left bank we soon came to a place where we could see Abbotsford on the opposite side of the river — and a charming view it makes. Then comes Melrose with all its varied associations. Driving toward the east, we ascended a hill near the summit of Bemerside Heights and halted to enjoy 'Scott's favourite view.' Below was a bend of the river marking the site of Old Melrose, the establishment which preceded the more pretentious abbey in the village. Far away were the summits of the Eildon Hills. On the day of Scott's funeral, the procession climbed this hill on the way to Dryburgh Abbey, the hearse being drawn by Sir Walter's own coach-horses. At the spot where we were standing, it is said, the faithful animals halted of their own accord, not knowing that their master could no longer enjoy his favourite view.

We soon came to the beautiful ruins of Dryburgh Abbey, where Scott lies buried. It is a place he was fond of visiting, so much so that in a letter to Miss Carpenter, before they were married, he referred to it

[1] See *ante*, Chapter 1, page 36.

SCOTT'S TOMB, DRYBURGH

with enthusiasm, adding, 'When I die, Charlotte, you must cause my bones to be laid there.' This brought a lively reply from the young lady: 'What an idea of yours was that to mention where you wished to have your *bones laid.* If you were married, I should think you were tired of me. A very pretty compliment *before marriage.* . . . Take care of yourself if you love me, as I have *no wish* that you should *visit* that *beautiful* and *romantic* scene, the burying-place.'

Still farther to the east lies Kelso, where Scott spent several summers with a relative and attended the village school; while in the valley below lie the principal scenes of 'Marmion.' In the hills to the north, between Melrose and Kelso, is Sandy Knowe, the farm of the poet's grandfather, where the fresh air of the Scottish hills gave a new lease of life to the child of three years. Some recollections of these early days found their way into 'St. Ronan's Well,' published nearly half a century later. A frequent visitor at the fireside of Sandy Knowe was the parish clergyman, Dr. Duncan, who perhaps failed to appreciate the presence of a poet in embryo. Scott had early committed to memory long passages from Ramsay's 'Tea-Table Miscellany' and one or two other favourite volumes, which he would shout at the top of his voice, regardless of the presence of the good minister, who would testily exclaim, 'One may as well speak in the mouth of a cannon as where that child is.' The old gentleman lived to be nearly ninety. 'He was,' says Scott, 'a most excellent and benevolent man, a gentleman in every feeling, and altogether different from those of his order who cringe at the tables of the gentry or domineer and riot at those of the yeomanry.' There

seems to be no doubt that in the personage of Mr. Josiah Cargill, the shy, absent-minded, but learned and conscientious, and always lovable, clergyman of 'St. Ronan's Well,' Scott drew a portrait of the excellent divine whom he had learned to respect in his early days.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### REDGAUNTLET

I WAS standing, one afternoon, among some rugged rocks, half covered with sand and seaweed, which lined the shores of the Solway Firth, when my attention was suddenly attracted by a large black horse ridden by a woman. They were far away from shore and the animal seemed to be lightly cantering over the surface of the water. I suddenly realized the peculiar characteristic of the Solway. The tide was going out and what seemed to be the surface of a wide, inland sea was in reality a broad stretch of glistening white sand, still wet enough to catch and reflect the rays of the sun.

In spite of the fact that the rider was a woman, I was reminded of the thrilling incident that marks one of the earlier chapters of 'Redgauntlet.' Darsie Latimer had wandered out in the late afternoon over the wet sands of the Solway, watching with great interest the exertions of some horsemen, who were intent upon the sport of spearing salmon. The ebb of the tide leaves numberless little pools, formed by the inequality of the surface, and in these the fish dart about, making frantic efforts to escape to deeper water. The horsemen chase the salmon at full gallop, striking at them with their spears,—a form of amusement requiring great skill and perfect horsemanship. The riders had ceased their sport and were returning to the shore, while Darsie lingered on the sands. Suddenly he heard an abrupt voice, calling out,

'Soho, brother! you are late for Bowness to-night'; and, turning, recognized the most expert of the salmon fishers, a tall man riding a powerful black horse. Darsie replied that he was a stranger and about to return to the shore. 'Best make haste, then,' said the fisherman. 'He that dreams on the bed of the Solway, may wake in the next world. The sky threatens a blast that will bring in the waves three feet abreast.' The young man, not realizing the danger, had to be warned a third time, and finally was pulled up on the horse behind his rescuer, who was compelled to gallop to safety at full speed.

At a later time, the tall fisherman, who proved to be Hugh Redgauntlet, kidnapped young Latimer, whom he had recognized as his long-lost nephew, and carried him in a cart across the Solway to England. While lying on his back upon some sacks of straw, his arms and legs tightly bound with cloth bandages, Darsie again heard the rush of the advancing tide. He 'not only heard the roar of this dreadful torrent, but saw, by the fitful moonlight, the foamy crests of the devouring waves, as they advanced with the speed and fury of a pack of hungry wolves.' One or two of the great waves of the 'howling and roaring sea' had reached the cart, when he was again rescued by Redgauntlet in much the same manner as before.

The reality of these fearful tides exceeds even Scott's vivid description. In a volume published more than eighty years ago[1] by a local writer, I find this account:—

During spring tides, and particularly when impelled by a strong southwester, the Solway rises with prodigious

[1] *Picture of Dumfries, with Historical and Descriptive Notices*, by John McDiarmid, 1832.

rapidity. A loud booming noise indicates its approach, and is distinguishable at the distance of several miles. At Caerlaverock and Glencaple, where it enters the Nith, the scene is singularly grand and imposing; and it is beautiful to see a mighty volume of water advancing, foam-crested, and with a degree of rapidity which, were the race a long one, would outmatch the speed of the swiftest horses. The tide-head, as it is called, is often from four to six feet high, chafed into spray, with a mighty trough of bluer water behind — swelling in some places into little hills, and in others scooped into tiny valleys, which, when sunlit, form a brilliant picture of themselves. From the tide-head proceed two huge jets of water, which run roaring along, searching the banks on either side — the antennæ, as it were, which the ocean puts forth, and by which it feels its way when confined within narrow limits. A large fire-engine discharging a strong stream of water bears a close resemblance to this part of the phenomena of a strong spring tide; but the sea-water is broken while the other is smooth, and runs hissing, or rather gallops, along in a manner to which no language of ours can do justice.

Between Bowness, the northernmost point of Cumberland, and Whinnyrig, south of Annan in Dumfriesshire, the Solway is only two miles wide. It is now safely crossed by a railroad bridge, but two generations ago the Scottish farmers and dealers were in the habit of crossing the sands at low tide to save a long and tedious détour of about thirty miles by way of Carlisle. Many a belated traveller, missing his way in the darkness or the fog, has been overtaken by the tide and lost.

All the scenes of 'Redgauntlet,' except those in Edinburgh and Dumfries, are laid near the shores of the Solway. Shepherd's Bush and Brokenburn, imaginary places, of course, may be considered to be somewhere on the Scottish side near Annan. Mount Sharon, the

residence of the kind-hearted Joshua Geddes, supposed to be in the same vicinity, was really modelled after some pleasant recollections of the author's boyhood at Kelso. It was a place of quiet contentment, where one might wander through fields and pastures and woodlands by convenient paths amid scenes of peaceful beauty. Even the partridges and the hares had learned the kindly nature of the good Quaker and his amiable sister, and did not fear their approach.

Scott drew the charming picture of the Quaker household from his early friendship for the Waldie family in Kelso. Their son Robert was one of his schoolfellows. He spent many happy hours in their hospitable home, where he was treated with the utmost kindness by Robert's mother, universally known in the neighbourhood as Lady Waldie. A privilege which Scott particularly appreciated was the permission to 'rummage at pleasure' through the small but well-selected library which the good lady's deceased husband had left her.

On the English side of the Solway, the Wampool River, where the Jumping Jenny landed Alan Fairford, along with a cargo of contraband goods, including gunpowder for the use of the Jacobites, may be easily found on the map. The English scenes were laid between here and Carlisle, but the story of the visit to this region of Charles Edward, disguised as Father Buonaventure, is pure fiction, and of course the localities cannot be identified, except Burgh-upon-Sands, where there is a monument to Edward I, to which Hugh Redgauntlet refers as the party is passing by.

The English residence of Hugh Redgauntlet to which Darsie was conducted by his captor, described as ancient

and strong, with battlemented roof and walls of great thickness, but otherwise resembling a comfortable farmhouse, is purely fictitious. We visited, however, on the Scottish side of the Solway, a splendid modern castle, which, judged by an old painting of the place as it was in 1789, would admirably fit the description. This is Hoddam Castle, five miles southwest of the village of Ecclefechan, Carlyle's birthplace, where we spent a night in one of the quaintest little inns in Scotland, a survival of the time when Scottish inns offered few comforts to the traveller, but made up for it in proffered sociability.

Hoddam Castle is beautifully situated in the midst of a grove of fine trees overlooking the river Annan. A battlemented tower, surmounted by conical turrets, rises high above the extensive modern structure surrounding it. This is the ancient building, for centuries occupied by the Herries family. Scott originally intended to call his novel 'Herries' instead of 'Redgauntlet,' and was with much difficulty persuaded by Constable to accept the latter title. The old castle was built in the fifteenth century by John, Lord Herries, to whom was granted an extensive tract of land, extending over three or four counties.

The Herries family, to which Hugh Redgauntlet is supposed to belong, was always powerful. In their later years, like their fictitious descendant, its members were ardent supporters of the Stuart family. John Maxwell, who took the name of Lord Herries upon his marriage, was a zealous defender of Mary Queen of Scots. He assisted her escape from Loch Leven Castle, fought for her at Langside, escorted her, after the battle, to his

own house in Galloway, and thence to Dundrennan Abbey, and finally conducted her, in a small vessel, to England. His descendant, William, the ninth Lord Herries and fifth Earl of Nithsdale, participated in the Jacobite uprising of 1715. He was made a prisoner at Preston and sent to the Tower, where he was tried and condemned to death. His countess, with rare courage and resourcefulness, first forced her way to an audience with the King in St. James's Palace, and pleaded on her knees for her husband's life. Finding this ineffectual, she paid a last farewell visit to her husband, taking several lady friends with her. They succeeded in disguising the Earl in feminine apparel and thus effected his escape. When Darsie Latimer was obliged, at his uncle's command, to wear petticoats as a means of concealing his identity, he was only following the example of one of his ancestors.

In 1690 the castle and Barony of Hoddam passed from the Herries family to John Sharpe, and remained in the hands of his heirs until very recent times. One of these was Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Scott's intimate friend, who helped collect the 'Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border,' to which he contributed two ballads. Scott was a frequent guest at his house, and he often dined with Scott's family in Edinburgh or at Abbotsford. He was a man of distinction in letters and an artist as well. Two well-known etchings by him, the 'Dish of Spurs' and 'Muckle-Mouthed Meg,' besides a caricature of Queen Elizabeth, adorn the walls of Abbotsford. His ancestors, like the Herries family, were ardent Jacobites.

The Sharpes claimed relationship to the notorious

HODDAM CASTLE

Grierson of Lag, who was the original of Sir Robert Redgauntlet in 'Wandering Willie's Tale.' Sir Robert Grierson, who was born in 1655 and died in 1733, was an infamous scoundrel who took fiendish delight in persecuting the Covenanters. In his drunken revels he made them the theme of scurrilous jests. In a vaulted chamber of his Castle of Lag, now in ruins, he had an iron hook upon which he hanged his prisoners. Often he would amuse himself by rolling his victims down a steep hill in barrels filled with knives and iron spikes. He was an object of terror and hatred through all the neighbouring country and for many years after his death was represented in theatrical productions as a hideous monster. Scott heard in his youth the wild tales of the terrible Grierson, and made them the basis of the story told by Wandering Willie.

If by Redgauntlet Castle we mean the house of the blind fiddler's hero, we must take for its original the ancient ruin of Lag Castle, built in the fourteenth century; but if the seat of the Herries family is meant, Hoddam Castle is of course the prototype, even though Scott places it on the English side of the Solway.

A bit of scenery worth recalling in connection with this novel is the Marquis of Annandale's Beefstand, or as it is now called, the Devil's Beef Tub, the place where the Laird of Summertrees had his wonderful adventure, escaping from his captors by rolling, over and over, like a barrel, down the steep incline that leads to the bottom of the hollow. It is as lonely and desolate a spot as we saw anywhere in Scotland. The hills circle about to form a huge bowl, in the rim of which there is apparently no break, so that one wonders how the little brook at the

bottom manages to find an outlet so as to remain a brook at all, instead of accumulating its waters to form a great natural lake. The old Border raiders used the hollow as a convenient place in which to collect stolen cattle. From the road on the rim it seems to be a dark, dismal hole, without sign of life except an occasional ring of earth and stone, built for the protection of the sheep. Scott knew personally a Jacobite gentleman, who escaped at this place in precisely the same manner as 'Pate-in-Peril,' while being taken to Carlisle a prisoner for participation in the 'affair of 1745.'

'Redgauntlet' is autobiographical to a greater extent than any other of Scott's novels. It is true that 'Waverley' gives a hint of his own early love of reading, while 'The Antiquary' reflects his interest in the relics of an older civilization. Indeed, bits of personal reminiscence are woven into nearly all his tales. But 'Redgauntlet' more directly reveals Scott himself and those nearest to him than any or all of the others.

The voluminous correspondence of Alan Fairford and Darsie Latimer is full of recollections of school days in Edinburgh, when as a boy Scott climbed the 'kittle nine stanes,' a difficult and dangerous passage over the steep granite rock upon which the castle stands, or helped 'man the Cowgate Port,' an ancient gateway to the city from which the youngsters in snowballing time annoyed the passers-by and defied the town guard. One of his most intimate companions in the days when he was reading law was William Clerk, whom he describes as a man of acute 'intellect and powerful apprehension,' but somewhat trammelled with 'the fetters of indolence.' There is no doubt that Scott himself was the original of

Alan Fairford nor that William Clerk was the model for Darsie Latimer. The fine portrait of Saunders Fairford, who was so anxious to have his son 'attain the proudest of all distinctions — the rank and fame of a well-employed lawyer,' was drawn from Scott's own father, many years after the death of that worthy gentleman.

> Mr. Saunders Fairford, . . . was a man of business of the old school, moderate in his charges, economical and even niggardly in his expenditure, strictly honest in conducting his own affairs and those of his clients, but taught by long experience to be wary and suspicious in observing the motions of others. Punctual as the clock of St. Giles tolled nine, the neat dapper form of the little hale old gentleman was seen at the threshold of the Court-hall . . . trimly dressed in a complete suit of snuff-coloured brown, with stockings of silk or woolen, as suited the weather; a bobwig and a small cocked hat; shoes blacked as Warren would have blacked them; silver shoe-buckles and a gold stock-buckle. A nosegay in summer, and a sprig of holly in winter, completed his well-known dress and appearance.

Even Peter Peebles, the poor old derelict, ruined by a lifetime of perpetual litigation, was a real character, well known in Edinburgh, and Scott himself, in common with most young lawyers, took his turn in 'practising' on this case.

The re-introduction of Charles Edward, who was so fascinating as a figure in 'Waverley,' was not so successful. In the earlier novel, his movements are, in the main, historically accurate. His reappearance, twenty years later, under circumstances purely fictitious, is by comparison almost wholly lacking in interest. There is, however, a certain attractiveness about the enthusiasm of his ardent supporter, Hugh Redgauntlet, and the

book is not lacking in minor characters, who are almost as fascinating as any of the novelist's earlier creations. Wandering Willie is one of these — the blind fiddler who holds communication with the captive Darsie, by the rendering of appropriate tunes, the words of which the latter is quick to recall and clever enough to interpret. Another is Nanty Ewart, the skipper of the Jumping Jenny, who can read his Sallust like a scholar, and appeals to one's sympathies in spite of his dissipation.

Although 'Redgauntlet' was at first received somewhat coldly, it is nevertheless true, in the words of Lady Louisa Stuart, that 'the interest is so strong one cannot lay it down.' Its lack of value historically is more than offset by the personal interest of its characters and the many episodes of intense dramatic realism.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### TALES OF THE CRUSADERS

THE two stories published simultaneously under this title are widely different in character. In 'The Betrothed,' the reader gets no glimpse of the Holy Land, though he is amply compensated by a view of some of the most delightful portions of picturesque Wales. In 'The Talisman,' on the contrary, not only is the whole of the stage-setting in Palestine, but our old friend, Richard the Lion-Hearted, who made such strong appeals to our sympathies in 'Ivanhoe,' appears once more on the scene. Perhaps this fact accounts for the great popularity of 'The Talisman,' which has always gone hand in hand with 'Ivanhoe,' in the estimation of the younger readers, at least, and possibly the older ones, especially in England and America, as among the most attractive of Scott's novels. 'The Betrothed' is no more a tale of the Crusades than is 'Ivanhoe.' In the former the Constable de Lacy is supposed to be absent in the Holy Land a few years and returns in disguise. King Richard does the same in 'Ivanhoe.'

James Ballantyne, who was always a candid critic, found so much fault with 'The Betrothed' that Scott, bitterly disappointed, decided to cancel it altogether. The sheets were hung up in Ballantyne's warehouse, while Scott started a new tale which should be really a story of the Crusades. Ballantyne was as much pleased with 'The Talisman' as he had been disappointed with

its predecessor. Both author and printer hesitated to destroy the sheets of an entire edition of the earlier production, and it was finally decided that 'The Talisman' was such a masterpiece that it might be relied upon to 'take the other under its wing.' The publication of the two volumes as the 'Tales of the Crusaders' seemed to justify Ballantyne's faith, for, says Lockhart, 'The brightness of "The Talisman" dazzled the eyes of the million as to the defects of the twin story.' Whether this opinion would be endorsed by careful readers of to-day is doubtful, for 'The Betrothed' has some excellent characters, notably Eveline Berenger, Wilkin Flammock, and his daughter Rose, Hugo de Lacy, and his high-minded nephew Damian. Moreover, Scott here adds to his 'country' a bit of the United Kingdom, which he had not previously touched, and does it with his usual charm.

The novelist's information regarding Welsh history and antiquities was derived largely from conversations with his friend, the Rev. John Williams, Archdeacon of Cardigan, who had made a special study of the subject. But he had always felt an interest in that region. 'There are,' he writes to Joanna Baillie in 1814, 'few countries I long so much to see as Wales. The first time I set out to see it I was caught by the way and married. God help me! The next time, I went to London and spent all my money there. What will be my third interruption, I do not know, but the circumstances seem ominous.' Whether he actually saw the country before writing the novel is doubtful. He did visit it, however, in August of 1825, just after 'The Betrothed' was published, and stopped at Llangollen, where he paid a visit to the

famous 'Ladies' of that place. These two old ladies, one seventy and the other sixty-five when Scott saw them, had 'eloped' together from Ireland, when they were young girls, one of them dressed as a footman in buckskin breeches. Valuing their liberty above all the allurements of matrimony, they made a secret journey to Wales, and for fifty years lived a quiet and comfortable life in the beautiful vale of Llangollen.

Local tradition assigns this lovely valley as the scene of 'The Betrothed.' Although this may be doubted, it is nevertheless fairly representative of what Scott evidently had in mind. The river Dee winds among a maze of low, partially wooded, and well-rounded hilltops, here and there finding its way through green meadows, set off by hedges of full-grown trees, and at each turn glistening in the sun like a broad ribbon of silver.

I was induced to walk up a long sloping hillside for a distance of about three miles from the village, and was rewarded at the summit by a superb view of northern Wales, for many miles in every direction, and at the same time saw the ruins of the ancient Castell Dinas Bran. This, or something very like it, must have been the Garde Doloureuse of the novel. It certainly had all the natural advantages claimed for that ancient Welsh stronghold, for no army would have found it easy to ascend that hill in the face of a determined garrison. The ruin has the indications also of having been well fortified by the art of man, its walls enclosing an area two hundred and ninety feet long by one hundred and forty feet wide.

The castle may have been built by the Britons before the Roman invasion. A well-founded tradition fixes it

as the seat of Eliseg, Prince of Powys, in the eighth century, and it figures in actual history as early as 1200, when it was the residence of a turbulent Welsh baron named Madog.

At Welshpool, directly to the south and near the English border, we visited the magnificent park and castle of the Earl of Powis. It stands on the site of the ancient Castell Coch, or Red Castle, famous as the seat of the great Welsh hero, Gwenwynwyn, who flourished in the latter part of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth century. That hero, whom Scott calls Gwenwyn, it will be remembered, upon seeing for the first time the beautiful damsel of sixteen, Eveline Berenger, the only child of his greatest rival and the heir of the strong fortress which he coveted, promptly resolved to marry her, thus starting the train of events which are recorded in the novel.

The present Powis Castle Park is a magnificent demesne of nearly a thousand acres. Its most important portion is a great deer-park, in the midst of which stands the imposing modern palace. The herds of deer quietly feeding on the lawn were kind enough to pose for me, when I made a picture of the castle, and added greatly to its picturesque aspect. On the south, the sloping ground has been cut into broad and beautiful terraces, surmounted by huge yews, trimmed smoothly in conical form. The stone walls are broken by a series of arches, above which are balustrades and statuary in great variety. Clinging vines and garden flowers of every description add colour to the beauty of the arrangement. Below the terraces is a gentle slope, planted with fruit trees, and then a level lawn, in the

POWIS CASTLE, WALES

midst of which is a stately elm. The whole is a triumph of landscape gardening which would have amazed the famous Gwenwynwyn.

Following the course of the tale our next objective was the city of Gloucester, the crowning glory of which is the great cathedral, founded by the Saxon earl, Osric, in 680 A.D. The massive Norman nave was commenced in 1088 and the fine choir was completed in the fourteenth century. The great east window, measuring seventy-two feet in height, thirty-eight feet in width, and containing two thousand seven hundred and thirty-six square feet of glass, is the largest in England if not in the world. Passing around the cathedral we found a house which figures in the story,—the Deanery, as it is now called. It was formerly the prior's lodge of the old Benedictine abbey, and is the oldest house in Gloucester. Within its walls a meeting of Parliament is said to have been held by Richard II.

Of the scenery of 'The Talisman' it is difficult to say much beyond what is generally known about the Holy Land. Scott never visited Palestine and wrote only in general terms. He did contrive, however, to inject a bit of Scottish scenery with which he was familiar, just as he managed to begin the novel with the adventures of a Scottish knight, and to find another countryman among the retainers of King Richard, in the person of Sir Thomas de Multon, the Lord of Gilsland, whose 'love and devotion to the King was like the vivid affection of the old English mastiff to his master.'

Readers of 'The Talisman' will recall, in the mansion of the hermit of Engaddi, the beautiful miniature Gothic chapel, and will quickly note the resemblance to Roslin

Chapel, near Edinburgh. The famous feudal baron, William St. Clair, built the latter in a spirit of penitence. An old manuscript informs us that 'to the end he might not seem altogether unthankfull to God for the benefices received from Him, it came in his minde to build a house for God's service of most curious work, the which, that it might be done with greater glory and splendour he caused artificers to be brought from other regions and forraigne kingdoms and caused dayly to be abundance of all kinde of workemen present.'

The foundation was laid in 1446. It is called 'florid Gothic' for want of a better name. There is no other architecture like it in the world. It is a medley of all architectures, the Egyptian, Grecian, Roman, and Saracenic being intermingled with all kinds of decorations and designs, some exquisitely beautiful and others quaint and even grotesque. There are thirteen different varieties of the arch. The owner possessed wealth and wanted novelty. He secured the latter by engaging architects and builders from all parts of Europe. The most striking feature of an interior crowded with beautiful forms is the 'Prentice's Pillar, a column with spiral wreaths of exquisitely carved foliage.

It is curious to think of such a chapel as this concealed in a mysterious mansion in the desert of Engaddi, but it is the only touch of realistic description in the whole book, and Scott makes use of it with his usual skill.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### WOODSTOCK

BETWEEN the completion of the 'Tales of the Crusaders' and the next novel, 'Woodstock,' came the distressing change in Scott's affairs, that set apart the remaining years of his life as a period of sadness, disappointment, grief, and physical pain. They were years of almost superhuman exertion, when the superb personal character of the man, backed by an unconquerable will, triumphed over an accumulation of afflictions that would have broken the heart of an ordinary person. The victory cost him his life — but it was only after a battle of six hard years, and even then it was the frail body and not the heart of the man that succumbed.

In the year 1825, when 'Woodstock' was commenced, the old, happy days, when writing a story was a joyous pastime, came to an end forever, and in their stead came a sense of toil and conscious effort. 'It was a pleasant sight,' said Lockhart, 'when one happened to take a passing peep into his den, to see the white head erect, and the smile of conscious inspiration on his lips, while the pen, held boldly and at a commanding distance, glanced steadily and gayly along a fast-blackening page of "The Talisman." It now often made me sorry to catch a glimpse of him, stooping and poring with his spectacles, amidst piles of authorities, a little notebook ready in his left hand, that had always used to be at liberty for patting Maida.'

Lockhart is here referring to the vast toil required in the preparation of a 'Life of Napoleon,' which Scott had undertaken immediately after returning from the tour through Ireland and Wales, made soon after the completion of 'The Talisman.' It was the year when rumours of financial troubles in London began to reach his ears, followed swiftly by the failure of Constable and the Ballantynes, and later by the sickness and death of Lady Scott and his own physical suffering. Undaunted by misfortune he bravely continued his 'Napoleon,' and soon conceived the idea of composing a work of imagination at the same time. The first of three volumes of 'Woodstock' was, under these trying circumstances, completed in fifteen days and the entire novel in three months.

The news of Scott's distress had spread throughout Scotland and England and into many parts of Europe, and there was naturally a keen interest in the story which he was known to be writing. The announcement that Scott was the author of the Waverley Novels and that the man who had accomplished this marvellous success had met with financial failure came as a shock and a thrill. 'Scott ruined!' exclaimed the Earl of Dudley; 'the author of "Waverley" ruined! Good God! Let every man to whom he has given months of delight give him a sixpence, and he will rise to-morrow morning richer than Rothschild!' The result of this state of the public mind was that 'Woodstock' was successful beyond the author's fondest dreams.

The village of Woodstock, where practically the whole of the scene is laid, lies about eight miles north-west of Oxford. The market-place still has an ancient

look, though the houses are in fairly good repair. To readers of the novel the chief place of interest in the village is the old parish church where the Reverend Nehemiah Holdenough was rudely crowded from his pulpit by the canting Independent soldier, Trusty Tomkins, who proceeded to preach one of those weird sermons, common enough at that time, in which the texts of Scripture were perverted to apply to current events, with whatever significance the orator might choose. A fine Norman doorway on the south side marks the oldest part of the edifice, dating back probably as far as the twelfth century. The north side is modern, having been built to replace the older walls that were torn down. The tower was built in 1783.

The real interest of Woodstock lies not in the church nor the village, but in the vast park and palace, now called Blenheim, the property of the Duke of Marlborough. As early as the reign of William the Conqueror, Woodstock was a royal forest, and was so designated in the Domesday Book. His son, Henry I, enclosed it with a wall six miles in circumference (not so large as its present extent) and rebuilt the house. It was here that Thomas à Becket in 1162 began the quarrel with King Henry II, which led to his murder at Canterbury. King Henry added to the old palace of Woodstock the famous tower and maze, where 'the fair Rosamond' might be safely concealed from the jealous eyes of Queen Eleanor. 'Rosamond's Well,' where Tomkins met his well-deserved death at the hands of Joceline Joliffe, is the only remnant of the old palace in existence. It is a spring, walled in and paved, and guarded by an iron fence. We drank of its waters

and, following the instructions of the old woman who acts as its keeper, threw what was left in the glasses over our left shoulders 'for luck.' The well was originally within the walls of the palace, so that its occupant could obtain water without the risk of stepping outside. It may, therefore, be considered as marking approximately the site of the old palace.

Richard the Lion-Hearted and John were visitors to Woodstock. Henry III made some improvements in the house. Edward III and Queen Philippa were much attached to Woodstock and often made it their residence. It was during their reign that the poet Chaucer, who was first a page and later a royal 'esquire,' was frequently at Woodstock. He married one of the Queen's maids of honour, and lived in a house in the village which is still standing. As late as the time of James II, Woodstock continued to be occupied, as a favourite country seat, by the English sovereigns. During the great Civil War it was the scene of frequent skirmishes and in the time of the Commonwealth was in the possession of Cromwell.

The fantastic performances by which the commissioners of the Long Parliament were imposed upon and badly frightened when they visited Woodstock, after the execution of Charles I, for the purpose of destroying it, are fully explained in Scott's Introduction.

In 1704, as a reward for his famous triumph in the battle of Blenheim, the victorious commander, John Churchill, was created first Duke of Marlborough, and presented with the vast estates of Woodstock. Queen Anne and the Parliament bestowed upon him in addition the princely sum of £240,000 with which to build a

GODSTOW PRIORY (BURIAL-PLACE OF 'THE FAIR ROSAMOND')

mansion. Blenheim Palace is the finest work of the most famous architect of his day, Sir John Vanbrugh, who designed the building by command of the Queen. Its front extends, from wing to wing, three hundred and forty-eight feet. The style is Italo-Corinthian. Its spacious halls are filled with splendid tapestries and many valuable paintings. There is a long ballroom, equipped as a library at one end and with a great pipe-organ at the other. The park comprises two thousand six hundred acres, with many fine beeches, oaks, elms, cedars of Lebanon, and an avenue of lindens. The river Glyme, which flowed through the estate of Woodstock, was dammed by the landscape gardener of Blenheim and converted into a picturesque lake, over which is an imposing bridge. In a remote corner of the grounds we found the celebrated King's Oak, a fine old tree supposed to be at least a thousand years old.

Two characters of 'Woodstock' stepped into the tale, direct from Scott's own household, thus giving a charming personal touch to this novel in common with 'Redgauntlet' and several of the others. One of these is the fine old hound, Bevis. It seems curious, in view of Scott's fondness for his dogs, that not one of them should find a place in any of his stories until so late a period of his life. Bevis, however, made up for the previous omissions, and he is a splendid picture of Sir Walter's favourite staghound Maida, 'the noblest dog ever seen on the Border since Johnnie Armstrong's time.' So wrote Scott to his friend Terry, adding, 'He is between the wolf and deer greyhound, about six feet long from the tip of the nose to the tail, and high and strong in proportion. . . . Tell Will Erskine he will eat off his

plate without being at the trouble to put a paw on the table or chair.' This noble animal, who for eight years enjoyed the distinction of daily companionship with one of the most appreciative masters who ever lived, came to his end in 1824, the year before 'Woodstock' was commenced. His image, sculptured in stone, had stood for a year or more by the door of the main entrance to Abbotsford, as a 'leaping-on' stone, which Scott found convenient in mounting his horse. Maida was buried beneath the stone, and an epitaph in Latin was carved around its base, Scott's English version of which reads: —

> Beneath the sculptured form which late you wore
> Sleep soundly, Maida, at your master's door.

The other character from Scott's household was his daughter Anne — the Alice Lee of the novel. The same loving care which Alice bestowed upon her aged parent, Scott had felt at the hands of his youngest daughter. When financial disaster began to weigh him down, and Lady Scott's health began to fail, it was Anne who tenderly supported her beloved father. In the sad days following the death of Lady Scott, she accompanied him to London and Paris and was by his side when he received his first paralytic stroke. Her health was shattered by the long strain of her mother's illness and death, followed by that of her father, and she survived her distinguished parent less than a year.

Regarding the historical characters in the novel, the critics seem to agree that the portraits of Cromwell and Charles II are far from accurate and of course their part in the story is imaginary. When Scott's enthusiasm for the Stuart family is considered, and his sympathy for

royalty in general, as well as the habit among Scotchmen of his time of regarding the great Protector as a hypocrite, it must be admitted that his picture of Cromwell, while far from flattering, is on the whole remarkably fair to that stern and powerful leader.

Although 'Woodstock' is not ranked among Scott's greatest novels, it is noteworthy that many critics, including Lockhart and Andrew Lang, both of whom usually preferred the Scottish romances, saw in it great merit. In one respect it is the most wonderful of all novels — in the self-control which enabled its author calmly to compose a well-constructed story, full of incident and dramatic power, in the face of afflictions which would have borne down a common mind to those depths of despair in which the ordinary duties of life are forgotten. Scott here proved to be not only a master of the art of story-telling, but the master of himself.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### THE FAIR MAID OF PERTH

Twoscore years elapsed between the day when Walter Scott, a lad of fifteen, felt a thrill of rapture as he viewed the valley of the Tay from the Wicks of Baiglie and the time when the same Walter, a worn-out man, first used the beautiful scene as the setting of a novel. The 'inimitable landscape,' as he called it, took possession of his mind and retained its influence during the greater part of his life. During the sad years of discouragement, when the 'Canongate Chronicles' had met with a cold reception, and his critical publishers were expressing their views somewhat too sharply, Scott turned once more to his well-loved Highlands for the theme of a story, and the picture which had so aroused his 'childish wonder' came back again after more than forty years.

Naturally our first thought upon arriving at Perth was to find the Wicks of Baiglie and enjoy the same sensation of wonder which Sir Walter had so graphically described. We accordingly drove out over the hills south of the town, on the Edinburgh road, till we came to the Inn of Baiglie, but all to no purpose. A burly blacksmith, who looked as if he might have been a descendant of Henry Gow himself, told us that many people sought the view which Scott had described, but 'it did not exist.' Changes in the road and the growth of foliage had completely destroyed the prospect from the

Wicks of Baiglie. We were compensated for our disappointment, however, by several glimpses of the valley from Moncreiff Hill and by a superb view, which we enjoyed the following day, from the summit of Kinnoull Hill, east of the city. At the foot of this hill is the modern Castle of Kinfauns, replacing the seat of Sir Patrick Charteris, to which the burghers of Perth made their memorable journey.

Perthshire is one of the largest counties in Scotland and excels all the others in the beauty and variety of its scenery. Along its southern border lies a region of moorlands, set with sparkling lochs and rippling streams, in the midst of which are the famous Trossachs. On the north are the rugged summits of the Grampian Mountains. In the centre is Loch Tay, one of the loveliest of Highland lakes, fed by the pure mountain streams that come down through the wild passes of Glen Lochay and Glen Dochart. Its outlet is the pleasant river Tay, passing down the eastern border through a valley of green meadows, waving groves, fertile fields, and princely palaces. In a drive of one hundred miles from Perth to Taymouth and back again by another route, we saw not so much as half a mile of scenery that might be called commonplace or uninteresting.

North of the city is the Palace of Scone, which became the seat of government in the eighth century, at which time the famous Stone of Scone was brought from Dunstaffnage. Most of the Scottish kings were crowned here, until Edward I, in the fourteenth century, carried the stone to Westminster Abbey. Farther north, in the same valley, is a bit of Shakespeare's scenery. We

passed through the Birnam Wood of 'Macbeth,' though we saw no trees. Perhaps this was natural, for according to Shakespeare they all went to Dunsinane Hill many years ago and the bard does n't say that they ever came back.

Perth is an ancient city, having received a charter from David I in the early part of the twelfth century. For nearly three hundred years it was the residence of the Scottish kings, who occupied during the greater part of that time the monastery of the Dominicans or Black Friars, formerly situated near the west end of the present bridge. This is the church to which Simon Glover and his daughter were walking when they were accosted by the frivolous young Duke of Rothsay, heir to the throne of Scotland. It was founded in 1231. The city was well provided with other religious houses, notably the Carthusian Monastery founded in 1429, the Grey Friars in 1460, and the Carmelites or White Friars, west of the town, dating from 1260. All of these have disappeared, the result of a famous sermon preached by John Knox, in 1559, in the old Church of St. John, which aroused the populace to a frenzy of excitement against the Church of Rome. St. John's Church was itself despoiled of everything which the mob thought savoured of popery, its altars, its images, and even its organ being destroyed. The building itself remained unhurt. Old St. John's was established as early as the fifth century. The transept and nave of the present building were erected in the thirteenth century and the choir in the fifteenth. At present the structure is divided into three churches, the East, the Middle, and the West. The appeal to the direct judg-

LOCH TAY

ment of Heaven, to determine the identity of the murderer of Oliver Proudfute, which is described as taking place within this building, was based upon a widespread belief that the corpse of a murdered person would bleed upon the approach of the guilty person, — the same superstition which Hawthorne used in 'The Marble Faun.'

Scott gives the Black Friars' Monastery a conspicuous place in his story, as the residence of King Robert III. That well-meaning but weak monarch had three sons: the eldest, David, Duke of Rothsay, died at Falkland Palace, under suspicious circumstances; the second, John, died in infancy; while the third, known in history as James I, nominally succeeded to the throne on the death of his father in 1406, but was held a prisoner by the English and did not actually come into his inheritance until 1424. One of his first acts was to throw Murdoch, the son and successor of the Duke of Albany, into prison, and a little later he punished the treachery of that nobleman by execution at Stirling Castle. James I was a great contrast to his weak-minded father and by the decisiveness of his character, the sagacity of his statesmanship, and the brilliancy of his literary attainments gave Scotland a memorable reign. It was due to his untimely death that Perth lost her prestige as the seat of the Scottish kings. He was suddenly surrounded by a band of three hundred Highlanders, who entered his apartment at the Dominican Priory and stabbed him to death with their daggers. The horror inspired by this assassination caused the abrupt transfer of the Court to Edinburgh and the King's successor, James II, was crowned at Holyrood Abbey instead of at Scone.

The house of the Fair Maid of Perth may still be seen in Curfew Street, near the site of the old monastery. A comparison of its neat, well-kept appearance with the pictures of the same house as it was before the 'restoration' shows that it has improved with age as wonderfully as Shakespeare's birthplace at Stratford-on-Avon. Not far away, in a very narrow and squalid close, is another house celebrated in the story — the veritable residence of Hal o' the Wynd. The rapid multiplication of the Smith family may cause the sceptical to doubt the authenticity of this landmark, but to the citizens of Perth it is the original dwelling of the famous Henry Smith, or Henry Gow.

The great public park and playground, north of the bridge, known as the North Inch, was the scene of the famous Battle of the Clans which took place in 1396. Thirty sturdy representatives of the Clan Chattan fought to the death with an equal number of the Clan Kay, or as Scott calls them, the Clan Quhele. When the conflict was about to commence, it was discovered that the Clan Chattan numbered only twenty-nine, whereupon a citizen of Perth, having no interest in the struggle, volunteered, for the paltry sum of half a mark, to risk his life in the frightful battle, and thus made up the required number. An ancient chronicler sums up the result in these quaint words: —

> At last, the Clankayis war al slane except ane, that swam throw the watter of Tay. Of Glenquhattannis, was left xi personis on live; bot thay war sa hurt, that thay micht nocht hold thair swerdis in thair handis.

There is a touch of contrition in Scott's portrayal of the cowardice of Conachar. The novelist's brother,

Daniel, a man of dissipated habits, had been employed in the island of Jamaica in some service against a body of insurgent Negroes, and had shown a deficiency in courage. He returned to Scotland a dishonoured man and Scott refused to see him. A stern sense of duty impelled him to refuse even to attend the funeral of the man who had disgraced his family. In later years he bitterly repented this austerity and atoned for it by tenderly caring for the unfortunate brother's child.

Something of these feelings may have been in his mind when he wrote in his Diary on December 5, 1827: 'The fellow that swam the Tay would be a good ludicrous character. But I have a mind to try him in the serious line of tragedy. . . . Suppose a man's nerves, supported by feelings of honour, or say by the spur of jealousy, sustaining him against constitutional timidity to a certain point, then suddenly giving way, I think something tragic might be produced. . . . Well, I'll try my brave coward or cowardly brave man.'

Campsie Linn, where Conachar made his final appearance, and with a last despairing shriek 'plunged down the precipice into the raging cataract beneath,' is a pleasant little waterfall in the Tay, seen through a small clearing in the woods. It is scarcely a cataract nor are the precipices formidable. The religious house where Catharine took refuge has completely disappeared.

Falkland Castle, to which the Duke of Rothsay was carried, a prisoner, is in Fifeshire, about fifteen miles southeast of Perth. The rooms in which the Prince was quartered were probably in the old tower, which has completely disappeared. Excavations made by the Marquis of Bute in 1892 show it to have been an exten-

sive building fifty feet in diameter. The present castle, or the greater part of it, was built at a period somewhat later than that of the story. As early as 1160, Falkland was known as part of the property of the Earls of Fife, who were descendants of Macduff, the famous Thane of Fife, who put an end to the reign of Macbeth in 1057. On the death of Isabel, Countess of Fife, the last of her race, Falkland came into the hands of the Duke of Albany, the brother of King Robert III. Albany was intensely jealous of his nephew, the Duke of Rothsay, who, after attaining his majority, began to display traits of character more worthy than those ascribed to him in the novel. He was entrusted by the King with affairs of some importance and gave promise of developing into an active and vigorous successor to his father. This was, of course, a menace to the plans of Albany, who sought the crown for himself, and he therefore managed to exaggerate the young man's faults to the King and to stir up suspicions against him, until the feeble monarch consented to allow his son to be imprisoned for a time as a cure for his profligacy. The Queen, who might have interceded for the Prince, was dead, as was also the Bishop of St. Andrew, who had often been a mediator in the royal quarrels. Sir John de Ramorny, the young man's tutor, who had suggested to him the assassination of Albany and had been indignantly repulsed, revenged himself by false reports to his pupil's uncle, and was commissioned by the latter to arrest his former charge. The Duke of Rothsay was thereupon waylaid and carried to the Castle of Falkland. The common report was that he was placed in a dungeon and starved to death. It was said that a poor woman, who heard

HOUSE OF THE FAIR MAID OF PERTH

his groans while she was passing through the garden, kept him alive for a time by passing small pieces of barley cake through the bars. Another woman fed him with her own milk, which she conveyed through a small reed to the famished prisoner. Another story is that the daughter of the governor of the castle was the one who took compassion on the Prince, and that her wicked father put her to death as a punishment for showing mercy. The Duke of Albany and the Earl of Douglas were charged with the murder, but maintained that the Prince had died from natural causes and the Parliament unanimously acquitted them. Lord Bute, who gave much study to the records of the case, was inclined to doubt the commission of an actual murder, but admitted that the cause of the young Duke's death must always remain uncertain.

James I and James II made important additions to Falkland, and James V, who found it in a ruinous condition, made many extensive repairs and additions. It was here that the latter king died of a broken heart, at the early age of thirty-two. A few moments before his death, when informed of the birth of his daughter, Mary, who became the Queen of Scots, he exclaimed prophetically, referring to the crown, 'It cam' wi' a lass and it'll gang wi' a lass.' Mary herself visited the castle annually for five or six years, before her marriage with Darnley and spent many happy days there. Her son, James VI, also made it his residence and was living there at the time he was enticed away in the 'Gowrie Conspiracy.' The last king to visit the palace was Charles II, who came for a stay of several days, after his coronation at Scone in 1651. Later the troops of Cromwell

occupied the place, and its historical interest ceased soon afterward.

'The Fair Maid of Perth' was finished in the spring of 1828. When the author laid down his pen, it was to mark the real close of the Waverley Novels. True, others were yet to be written, but they were the work of a broken man, and failed to come up to Scott's high standard. It is one of the marvels of literature that a novel so attractive and interesting as 'The Fair Maid' could be produced under circumstances so distracting and painful. No one places it in the same rank as 'Guy Mannering' and 'Ivanhoe,' yet it was popular at the time of publication and has always been regarded as entirely worthy of the reputation of the 'Great Wizard.' The indomitable will of the master was still able to hold his matchless imagination to its task, though the days of its power were now numbered.

## CHAPTER XXX

### THE CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE AND OTHER TALES

The remaining tales of the Waverley Novels require only brief mention. There is but little in them of the 'Country of Sir Walter Scott,' and scarcely more of the author himself. They are the final efforts of a man whose extraordinary buoyancy of youthful spirit is at last beginning to sink beneath a burden too great for human endurance. To begin at fifty-five the uninspiring task of 'paying for dead horses' the vast sum of £117,000, an amount which few men are able to earn by honest labour in all the days of their lives, required a superb courage which only Scott's high sense of honour could have sustained. Scarcely had the resolve been made when a second crushing blow fell with a force more stunning than the first. His beloved wife, the companion of thirty years, was taken away at the hour of his greatest need. She who could relieve the tedium of his toil by slipping quietly into the room to see if the fire burned, or to ask some kind question, was no longer present to comfort him. He felt a paralyzing sense of loneliness and old age, which even the devotion of his daughter Anne could not relieve. To continue the awful grind of writing for money — for something which he could not enjoy nor save for any cherished purpose, but must surrender at once to others — required an almost superhuman exertion of will power. His health began to fail. Headaches and insomnia, added to rheumatism,

caused him great distress. His early lameness became intensified and made walking so painful that he had to abandon what had been his favourite form of exercise. The once vigorous frame had prematurely worn out under the strain imposed upon it. Scott had become an aged man at less than threescore years. Yet in these years of disappointment, grief, and physical pain he produced an amount of work of which an ordinary man might well be proud had it represented a lifetime of toil. From 1826, the year of Constable's failure, to 1831, this man of iron will produced no less than forty[1] volumes, besides fifteen important reviews, essays, etc., and in addition supervised the publication of his complete prose writings and the Waverley Novels, preparing for the latter a series of exhaustive introductions and notes.

I have anticipated a little by devoting a separate chapter to 'The Fair Maid of Perth' which appeared as

[1] The volumes were: —

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|---|---|---|
| Woodstock | 3 | volumes |
| Life of Napoleon Buonaparte | 9 | |
| Chronicles of the Canongate, First Series, — comprising The Two Drovers, The Highland Widow, and The Surgeon's Daughter | 2 | |
| Tales of a Grandfather | 12 | |
| Chronicles of the Canongate, Second Series — The Fair Maid of Perth | 3 | |
| Anne of Geierstein | 3 | |
| A History of Scotland | 2 | |
| The Doom of Devorgoil and Auchindrane | 1 | |
| Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft | 1 | |
| Tales of My Landlord, Fourth Series, — Count Robert of Paris, and Castle Dangerous | 4 | |
| | 40 | |

Three short stories, which Ballantyne objected to including in the Canongate Chronicles, were printed in *The Keepsake*. These were 'My Aunt Margaret's Mirror,' 'The Tapestried Chamber,' and the 'Death of the Laird's Jock.'

the Second Series of the 'Chronicles of the Canongate' in 1828. The 'First Series' was published in 1827 and comprised 'The Two Drovers,' 'The Highland Widow,' and 'The Surgeon's Daughter.' To many the chief interest lies in the Introduction. When the work was first projected, Scott thought of preserving his *incognito* by conceiving the tales to be the work of one Chrystal Croftangry, an elderly gentleman who had taken quarters for a time within the Sanctuary, as the immediate vicinity of Holyrood was called. Here, as in the famous Alsatia of London, debtors were safe from arrest. Scott at one time feared that the importunities of a certain relentless creditor might force him to take refuge in the Sanctuary. On November 1, 1827, he made this entry in his Journal: 'I waked in the night and lay two hours in feverish meditation . . . I suppose that I, the Chronicler of the Canongate, will have to take up my residence in the Sanctuary, unless I prefer the more airy residence of the Colton Jail, or a trip to the Isle of Man.' Fortunately this creditor was silenced by Scott's generous friend, Sir William Forbes, who privately paid the claim out of his own pocket.[1]

There is much in Mr. Croftangry's lengthy biography to remind one of Sir Walter himself. He finds pleasure in visiting the Portobello sands to see the cavalry drill, suggesting at once the young quartermaster of the Edinburgh Volunteers, who rode a black charger up and down the sands while he composed some of the most spirited stanzas of 'Marmion.' He delights to spend the wet mornings with his book and the pleasant ones in strolling upon the Salisbury Crags — just as Walter,

[1] See Chapter V, *Rokeby*, page 95.

the high-school boy and college student loved to do. In Mrs. Bethune Baliol, the genial old lady who assists Mr. Croftangry in his literary speculations, we have a kindly reference to a dear friend of the author — Mrs. Murray Keith, who died at eighty-two years of age, 'one of the few persons whose spirits and cleanliness, and freshness of mind and body made old age lovely and desirable.'

The volume is still more interesting because it contains Scott's first printed acknowledgment of the authorship of the Waverley Novels and gives an insight into some of the original suggestions of both characters and scenery. It also contains an account of the Theatrical Fund Dinner held in Edinburgh in February, 1827, in which Scott was publicly referred to as the author of the Waverley Novels and acknowledged in the presence of three hundred gentlemen the secret which he had hitherto confided to only twenty.

'The Highland Widow' is a story of that wild but beautiful portion of Argyllshire of which Loch Awe is the chief attraction. Dumbarton Castle, where the widow's unfortunate son bravely paid with his life for the mistaken teachings and indiscretions of his mother, is a conspicuous object on the right bank of the Clyde, a few miles below Glasgow. It stands on a high rock, the circumference of which at the base is fully a mile. It is still maintained as one of the defences of Scotland, in accordance with the Treaty of Union.

'The Two Drovers' is an excellent short story picturing the life of those men who drove their cattle from the

Highlands about Doune, to the markets of Lincolnshire or elsewhere in England, making the entire journey on foot, sleeping with their droves at night in all kinds of weather and enduring many hardships.

'The Surgeon's Daughter,' though it opens in one of the midland counties of Scotland, is chiefly a story of India, and the scenery is therefore not a part of Scott's Country, for he never saw it. The good old doctor, Gideon Grey, was, however, an old friend who lived in Selkirk, Dr. Ebenezer Clarkson, one of those hard-working country doctors who often combine, 'under a blunt exterior, professional skill and enthusiasm, intelligence, humanity, courage, and science.'

'Anne of Geierstein,' though sharply criticized by James Ballantyne and regarded by the author himself as a task which he hated, is nevertheless a wonderful work of imagination, in which the old-time genius is clearly manifest. Lockhart points out the power, which Scott retained in advanced years, of depicting 'the feelings of youth with all their original glow and purity,' and says that nowhere has the author 'painted such feelings more deliciously' than in certain passages of 'Anne of Geierstein.' He assigns as a reason the fact that Scott always retained in memory the events of his own happy life, and besides 'he was always living over again in his children, young at heart whenever he looked on them.'

Though admittedly erroneous in certain historical details, the volume contains some wonderful descriptions of scenery. Scott never visited Switzerland, where

the chief interest of the story lies, but seemed to have an instinctive grasp of its charm, which he accounted for by saying, 'Had I not the honour of an intimate personal acquaintance with every pass in the Highlands; and if that were not enough, had I not seen pictures and prints *galore?*' The story opens at the village of Lucerne, and the Lake of the Four Cantons, beneath the shadow of the awe-inspiring Mount Pilatus. Those who have travelled from this point to Bâle, and thence down the Rhine to Strasburg, should have a fairly good idea of the scenery of the novel — better, perhaps, than the author himself. Charles of Burgundy, whose character and career had made a strong impression upon Scott through the pages of Philippe de Comines, appears once more, and the novel closes with his defeat at Nancy and tragic death in a half-frozen swamp, the victim of the traitorous Campo-basso. The story of King René and the events at Aix in Provence was an afterthought, woven into the tale at the suggestion of James Skene, who supplied the necessary details.

'Count Robert of Paris' is a tale of Constantinople, a city which Scott had not visited. The difficulties under which it was written may be judged from such expressions in the Journal as these: 'My pen stammers egregiously and I write horridly incorrect'; 'The task of pumping my brain becomes inevitably harder'; 'My bodily strength is terribly gone; perhaps my mental also.' The spirit which enabled him to persevere in spite of Cadell and Ballantyne, who were again criticizing severely, may be seen from these lines: 'But I will fight it out if I can. It would argue too great an attachment

of consequence to my literary labours to sink under critical clamour. Did I know how to begin, *I would begin again this very day, although I knew I should sink at the end.*'

In spite of the doctor's advice, he kept on with his dictation — for he could no longer use the pen — and finished 'Count Robert' amidst a frightful sea of troubles. He had suffered three or four strokes of apoplexy or palsy, and had experienced daily tortures from cramp, rheumatism, and increasing lameness. Yet in the midst of all this affliction he thought of his creditors and said repeatedly to Lockhart, 'I am very anxious to be done, one way or another, with this "Count Robert," and a little story about the "Castle Dangerous"' — thus to the last continuing the old trick of starting a new story before its predecessor was finished. He even resumed his youthful practice of going in search of material, and actually undertook an excursion to Douglas in Lanarkshire, where he examined attentively the old ivy-covered fragment of the original castle, the ruins of the old church, and the crypt of the Douglases, filled with leaden coffins. He even talked with the people of the village, after his old-time fashion, and gathered such legends as they could remember. He was now on familiar ground and speedily finished the latest story, bringing 'Count Robert' to a close about the same time. The two were published in November, 1831, as the Fourth Series of 'Tales of My Landlord.' These volumes completed the literary labours of Sir Walter, except that he continued to work a little at his notes and introductions, but at last he took the advice of his friends and agreed to do no more work of an exacting

nature. A journey to the Continent followed, including a visit to Malta, but in the following year he was glad to return to his beloved Abbotsford. On the 21st of September, 1832, lying in the dining-room of the mansion which his industry and courage had saved to his family, and listening to the rippling of his beloved river Tweed, the brave and honourable as well as honoured writer, breathed his last. He had fought a good fight and died in the belief that he had won. And so he had. For although the debt was not entirely paid, the subsequent sale of copyrights realized enough to satisfy all claims. Scott's sense of honour and superb courage had won a glorious victory.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### A SUCCESSFUL LIFE

In travelling so many miles to view the scenery of Scott's work, I think the strongest impression I have received is that of the all-pervading personality of Scott himself. It was one of the joys of the experience that so many places, not particularly attractive in themselves, should suddenly become interesting when found to be connected in some way with Scott's life or with something he had written; and that scenes of great natural beauty should become invested with a new fascination whenever they were found to suggest some line of poetry or to recall some well-remembered incident. I am sure I should never have given a second thought to the bit of an old wall which is now the scant remnant of Triermain Castle, had I passed it without knowledge of its identity; but it was worth going far out of the way to see, if only for the sake of realizing how the merest fragment of an old ruin could suggest a poem to Scott and how he could rebuild a castle in all its early magnificence and people it with the children of his fancy.

I know of no more romantic place in all of beautiful Scotland than the vale of the Esk, where the river flows between high cliffs, clothed with thick shrubbery and overhanging vines; and one can stand by the side of the stream, looking over the lacelike foliage of the tree-tops, and catch glimpses now and then of some fascinating old ruin, peeping down like a fairy castle, lodged in the

topmost branches. Yet when I recall its charm, I cannot help remembering how it transformed an Edinburgh lawyer of small reputation into a poet of world-wide fame.

Wherever we went, whether driving through the Canongate of Edinburgh, or looking across the Tweed toward the Eildon Hills, or listening to the shrill screams of the sea-fowl as they dashed about the dizzy heights of St. Abb's Head, or wandering quietly through the woods that lend a wild and fairy-like enchantment to the Trossachs, there was always the feeling that Scott had been there before and had so left the impress of his personality that his spirit seemed to remain.

It was a pleasant sensation, for there seemed to be in it an indefinable consciousness of the presence of Scott's own genial nature, that spirit of good-fellowship which so delighted Washington Irving when he enjoyed the rare privilege of wandering over the hills and valleys with Sir Walter, listening to countless anecdotes and ballads, and sharing his boundless hospitality for several days.

This feeling became more and more intense as we went about in the Border Country, which must be regarded as Scott's real home, and it reached its culmination when we came to Abbotsford. Here, thanks to the courtesy of Mr. James Curle, the representative in Melrose of the Honourable Mrs. Maxwell-Scott, a great-granddaughter of the poet and the present owner of the estate, we were greeted with a kindness worthy of Sir Walter's own ideas of hospitality. We seemed to meet the original owner face to face — not the poet — not the novelist — but Walter Scott, the man.

The great mansion and the spacious, well-wooded estate which he took so much joy in creating and

ABBOTSFORD

struggled so desperately to save, seemed to typify all the success and all the failure of his career. The garden with the arched screen, copied by his own desire from the cloisters of Melrose Abbey; the pile of stones in the centre, that once formed the base of the ancient Mercat Cross of his native city; the stone image of the favourite old stag-hound Maida, placed just outside the door, as a constant reminder of the faithful friend of many years; the entrance itself, copied from the Palace of Linlithgow; the hall, with its fine carved woodwork from the old Kirk of Dunfermline; the museum with its collection of guns, swords, armour, and curious articles of every description, suggesting the author's antiquarian tastes and the loving interest which scores of friends took in presenting him with the things they knew he would appreciate; the library with its thousands of volumes representing the author's own literary tastes; the study with his own desk and chair; the dining-room with its highly prized ancestral portraits; and the bay-window through which Sir Walter looked for the last time upon the rippling waters of his beloved Tweed — all these seemed to bring his kindly personality nearer to us.

I believe it was this all-pervading personality, the spirit of brotherly kindness, of generosity and of love, that made Scott's life a success. It is reflected through page after page in the novels and poems, and shines out brilliantly from the beginning to the end of Lockhart's great biography. It is the very essence of that wholesome quality which has been so often remarked as one of the most distinguishing characteristics of the Waverley Novels.

There were no signs on Scott's property warning

trespassers to 'keep out.' He felt that such things would be offensive to the feelings of the people and if any of his neighbours could shorten a journey by walking through his grounds, he wanted them to have the advantage. There was one sign on his land, by a broad path through the woods, reading 'The *Rod* to Selkirk.' The spelling was Tom Purdie's, but the implied invitation to take a 'short cut' through the private estate was warmly endorsed by his master. It was a pleasure to him to see children come up with a pocketful of nuts gathered from his trees, rather than run away at sight of him, and he declared that no damage had ever been done in consequence of the free access which all the world had to his place.

When he walked over his estate, talking familiarly with Maida, who almost invariably accompanied him, he would stop for a friendly word with every tenant. 'Sir Walter speaks to every man as if they were blood relations,' said one of them. Happy the companion who could take such a walk with him. 'Oh! Scott was a master spirit — as glorious in his conversation as in his writings,' wrote Irving. 'He spoke from the fulness of his mind, pouring out an incessant flow of anecdote and story, with dashes of humour, and then never monopolizing, but always ready to listen and appreciate what came from others. I never felt such a consciousness of happiness as when under his roof.'

The same kindliness, experienced by tenants and visitors, was extended to the servants of the family, as Tom Purdie could heartily testify. Tom was brought before Scott, as sheriff, charged with poaching. He told his story with such pathos, — of a wife and many chil-

dren to feed, of scarcity of work and abundance of grouse, — mingling with it so much sly humour, that the 'Shirra's' kind heart was touched. He took Tom into his own employment as shepherd, and no master ever had a more faithful servant. When Purdie died, twenty-five years later, he was laid to rest in the churchyard of Melrose Abbey, where his grave is marked by a simple monument, inscribed by his master, 'in sorrow for a humble but sincere friend.' Peter Mathieson, a brother-in-law of Tom, who was employed as coachman about the same time, survived his master. The portraits of both these servants occupy an honoured place on the walls of the armoury at Abbotsford.

No man was ever on more delightful terms with his family than Sir Walter. Captain Basil Hall, who spent a Christmas fortnight at Abbotsford, recorded that 'even the youngest of his nephews and nieces can joke with him, and seem at all times perfectly at ease in his presence — his coming into the room only increases the laugh and never checks it — he either joins in what is going on, or passes.' When writing in his study, if Lady Scott or the children entered, his train of thought was not disturbed. He merely regarded the interruption as a welcome diversion by which he felt refreshed. Sometimes he would lay down his pen and, taking the children on his knee, tell them a story; then kissing them, and telling them to run away till supper-time, he would resume his work with a contented smile. He considered it 'the highest duty and sweetest pleasure' of a parent to be a companion to his children. They in turn reciprocated by sharing with 'papa' all their little joys and sorrows and taking him into their hearts as their

very best playfellow. No man ever took more pleasure in the education of his children. On Sundays he would often go out with the whole family, dogs included, for a long walk, and when the entire party were grouped about him, by the side of some pleasant brook, he would tell stories from the Bible, weaving into them all that picturesque charm and richness which have made his written stories so delightful. He taught his children to love the out-of-door life, and especially insisted upon their attaining proficiency in horsemanship, that they might become as fearless as himself. 'Without courage,' he said, 'there cannot be truth; and without truth, there can be no other virtue.'

What Scott taught his children, he impressed upon all, by the force of example, throughout his life. Shortly before his death, in a few simple words, he epitomized his creed — without intending to do so — in a tender parting message to his son-in-law. 'Lockhart,' he said, 'I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man — be virtuous — be religious — be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here.' When Lockhart asked if he should send for Sophia and Anne, he said, 'No, don't disturb them. Poor souls! I know they were up all night — God bless you all.'

This lifelong desire to 'be good' and to do good, without the slightest affectation, prudery, or sanctimoniousness, was I believe the crowning glory of Scott's life and the secret of his success.

Yet in many ways Scott was not successful. Judged by that test which is the only one allowed to many men, his life was distinctly a failure. In the ordinary usage of

the term, a man is accounted successful if he accomplishes his chief aim in life. Wealth is the aim of so many that rich men are usually considered successful, and those who die poor are commonly supposed to be failures.

Scott aimed to write a popular kind of poetry, and in this he succeeded. He then turned to fiction and here he was even more successful. But this kind of success did not represent his supreme desire. He sought to make it the means to an end, and the dream of his life was, after all, wealth. Not riches for himself. He was never mean enough for that, and selfishness did not enter into his nature. It was wealth for his family that he desired. He was a man of great pride and the old feudal system was full of attractiveness. He knew every detail of the history of the Scott family for centuries. He revered the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch as the head of his clan. As his writings, year after year, brought him financial returns almost fabulous in size, he began to cherish the desire to found a new branch of the Scott Clan. The irresistible impulse to add new lands to Abbotsford, regardless of cost, and to erect a great mansion, fit for the residence of an earl, all sprang from this one motive. The readiness with which he purchased a captaincy in the army for his eldest son, at a cost of £3500, and the cheerfulness with which he settled nearly the whole of Abbotsford upon young Walter and his affianced bride, promising that if he should be spared ten years he would give them as much more, are striking indications of his intense longing to establish the Scotts of Abbotsford among the great families of Scotland.

In this, the greatest ambition of his life, Scott was

completely thwarted. Though Abbotsford was saved from the wreck of his fortunes by an almost superhuman effort, the estate which passed to his heirs was not so large as he had expected, nor did his sons live long to enjoy it. The eldest, Walter, died in 1847, and as he had no son, the baronetcy expired with him. The younger son, Charles, had died in 1841.

The failure of Scott's hopes was the result of a long chain of circumstances. In early life he had undertaken the practice of law, and continued for ten years without rising above the level of mere drudgery, his earnings for the first five years averaging only eighty pounds annually and probably not rising very much higher during the subsequent years. Finding it necessary, at length, to give up the law entirely, he arranged to secure an appointment as Clerk of the Court of Session, to succeed an aged incumbent of that office. The agreement was that Scott should do the work while his predecessor drew the pay, in consideration of which he was to have the entire emolument after the old gentleman's death. The office was worth eight hundred pounds a year and offered a very fair substitute for the small earnings at the bar. Unfortunately the gentleman was so inconsiderate as to prolong his existence for six years after the bargain was made.

Scott was already in possession of a private income of one thousand pounds, to which the office of Sheriff of Selkirk added three hundred pounds, and was beginning to receive large rewards for his literary labour, 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel' bringing him £769 6*s*. for the first and second editions. It might be supposed that such an income would satisfy a young man not yet

thirty-four. Scott, however, was ambitious, and feeling the need of the additional income which did not at once materialize from the clerkship, sought to make up the deficiency by investing nearly all his capital in a commercial venture. He entered into a secret partnership with James Ballantyne in the printing business, which proved, with one exception, to be the greatest mistake of his life. The exception, which marked, in Lockhart's phrase, 'the blackest day in his calendar,' was in connecting his fortunes with John Ballantyne in the publishing business.

James Ballantyne's greatest fault was a tendency to rely too much upon Scott's judgment, and the latter was too much swayed by generous motives to be a prudent business manager. He would favour the publication of an unmarketable book rather than disappoint a friend. Moreover, his own great interest in works of an historical or antiquarian nature often led him astray. His judgment of good literature was better than his knowledge of what the public was likely to buy. The firm became loaded with unprofitable enterprises, which they, in turn, unloaded, in part, upon Constable, thus contributing one of the causes of the latter's downfall. Another weakness of James Ballantyne, who was an excellent printer and in many ways an exemplary man, was his distaste for figures and utter indifference to his balance-sheets — a fatal error for a business man.

John Ballantyne, a younger brother of James, was a light-headed, happy-go-lucky, careless little fellow, who could amuse a company of friends with comic songs and droll mimicry, who loved all kinds of sports, drove a tandem down the Canongate, was fond of dissi-

pation and gay company, and without the slightest capacity for business or interest in it. Like his brother he was intensely fond of Scott and loyal to him, but a reckless adventurer and spendthrift. Scott nicknamed him 'Rigdumfunnidos' and was always amused by him, but could scarcely have had respect for his business qualities. It must always remain a mystery why he entrusted so large an interest in his own fortunes to such a weakling.

An alliance, and, what is worse, a secret one, with two such men, who could not in any sense act as a brake upon Scott's own impulses nor steady him with the business experience which he sadly lacked, was mistake enough; but Scott himself committed a serious error in his own affairs. He fell into the habit of selling his literary productions before they were written, and carried this folly to such an extreme that about the time of the issue of 'The Fortunes of Nigel,' he had received payment, by notes, from the bookseller, for no less than four works of fiction, which at that time had not even been planned. They subsequently appeared as 'Peveril of the Peak,' 'Quentin Durward,' 'St. Ronan's Well,' and 'Redgauntlet.' The proceeds were spent upon the castle at Abbotsford before the books were even named. John Ballantyne was rapidly spending money which his firm had not earned, and Scott, who ought to have remonstrated against such rashness, was committing the same fault on a larger scale. Under the circumstances the only wonder is that the disaster was so long averted. When it came, Scott found himself involved in the debts of the Ballantynes to the extent of £117,000.

With superb courage he rose to the emergency.

Assuming the entire burden, and struggling against almost insuperable difficulties, he succeeded in paying £63,000, or considerably more than half of the indebtedness. Life insurance of £22,000 and £2000 in the hands of his trustees reduced the debt to about £30,000, which sum was advanced by Cadell, the publisher. All the creditors, except the latter, were then paid in full, and in 1847, fifteen years after Scott's death, Cadell was paid by a transfer of copyrights and the entire obligation was thus finally extinguished.

Had Scott died at the time of the Constable failure, leaving his affairs to be settled by the ordinary process of the law, and the Ballantyne creditors unpaid, the world would never have known whether the unprecedented success of his literary labours was after all quite sufficient to counterbalance the disastrous failure of his business affairs.

The catastrophe, however, brought out all the sterling qualities of his character. How much courage he possessed, what a high sense of honour, what patience, what endurance, even his closest friends had never realized. Just as those kindly personal qualities had woven an indescribable charm into the products of his fancy, such as no other series of writings had ever before possessed, so the highest and noblest traits of his character responded to the call of a great emergency, and converted the failures of a lifetime into a final triumph.

THE END

# INDEX


ABBOT, THE, 4, 10, 265–271; 348.
Abbotsford, 39, 46, 89, 90, 133, 146, 220, 233, 346, 352, 360, 376, 394, 396, 397, 398, 399, 401, 402.
Abercorn, Lady, letter to, 22.
Abercrombie, George, 119.
Aberfoyle, 74; clachan of, 192, 193; 194; old bridge, 193.
Adam, Rt. Hon. William, 267, 268.
Albany, Duke of, 381, 384, 385.
Allan-Fraser, Patrick, 154.
Allan, the river, 259.
Alsatia (Whitefriars), 323, 324.
Amboglanna, 136.
Annan, 357.
Annan, the river, 359.
ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN, 391, 392.
Anne, Queen, 374.
ANTIQUARY, THE, 145–159.
Arbroath, 151–155; 158.
Argyle, John, Duke of, 202, 207.
Argyle, Marquis of, 225, 226, 227, 228, 231.
Arthur's Seat, 8, 60.
Ashby de la Zouch, 234, 235, 236.
Ashestiel, 48, 62, 106, 346, 352.
Auchmithie, 155, 158.
Avon, the river, 283.

Baiglie, the Wicks of, 10, 378.
Bailie, Joanna, letter to, 366.
Balfour, John, of Burley, 169, 177, 178, 179.
Baliol, Barnard, founder of Barnard Castle, 88.
Ballantyne, James, 5, 106, 365, 372, 391, 392, 403.
Ballantyne, John, 5, 273, 372, 403, 404,
Balmawhapple, 124.
Balquhidder, Kirk of, 188, 189.
Balue, Cardinal John de la, 234, 343.
Bannockburn, 81, 104.
Bard's Incantation, The, 159.
Barnard Castle, 86–88, 92.
Beaton, Cardinal, 155.
Becket, Thomas à, 373.
Bemerside Heights, 352.
Ben An, 12, 76.
Ben Ledi, 12, 73, 77.
Ben Lomond, 12, 193.
Ben Nevis, 232.
Ben Venue, 12, 74, 76, 78.
BETROTHED, THE, 365–369.
Birnam Wood, 380.
Bishop's Palace, the, Kirkwall, 307.
Blackford Hill, 8, 57, 59.
Black Ormiston, the Laird of, original of Julian Avenel, 261.
Blackwood, William, criticism by, of *The Black Dwarf*, 165.
Blair Adam Club, The, 267.
BLACK DWARF, THE, 15, 160–165.
Blenheim, battle of, 374.
Blenheim Palace, 373–375.
Bohun, Sir Henry de, 104.
Border Minstrelsy, 52.
Borthwick, the river, 35.
Bothwell Bridge, 168, 170, 171.
Bothwell Castle, 172.
Bower, Johnny, guide at Melrose, 41.
Bowhill, seat of the Duke of Buccleuch, 35.
Bowness, 357.
Bradwardine, Bears of, 107, 109.
Bradwardine, Cosmo Comyne, 118, 123.
Bradwardine, Rose, 113.
Braes of Balquhidder, 11, 66, 78, 186, 187, 196.
Branksome Hall, 37, 43.
Branxton Hill, 7.
BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN, THE, 16, 20, 21, 91, 96–99; 104.
BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR, THE, 215–223; 190.
Brignall Woods, 91, 92.
Brig o' Turk, 71, 74, 77.
Brogar, Bridge of, 310.
Brown Square, 9.
Bruce, John, discoveries of, in Kinrossness, Shetland, 298, 299.
Bruce, Robert, 40, 80, 101, 102, 103, 124, 129, 152, 191, 230, 262, 304, 332.
Bryant, William Cullen, quoted, 164.
Buccleuch, Duchess of (Countess of Dalkeith), 31, 32, 34, 46.
Buccleuch, Duke of, 32; 35; 46; 49.
Buchanan, Francis, 120.
Buchanan, John, 72, 120.
Burgh-upon-Sands, 358.
Burns, Robert, 126, 142.
Byron, Lord, 104.

Cadell, Robert, 392, 405.
Cadyow Castle, 30; quotation, 31.
Caerlaverock Castle, 127–129, 135, 357.
Caerlaverock Churchyard, grave of Old Mortality, 167.

# INDEX


Calton Hill, 60.
Cambus Kenneth, 80.
Cambusmore, 72, 120.
Campbell, Robert MacGregor, original of Rob Roy, exploits of, 182–188; death of, 189.
Campsie Linn, 110, 383.
Canongate, The, Edinburgh, 209.
Cargill, George, original of Saunders Mucklebackit, 156.
Carlisle, 21, 121, 357, 358, 362.
Caroline, Queen, 204.
Carpenter, Miss Charlotte Margaret. *See* Lady Scott.
Carrick, Margaret, original of Tib Mumps, 137.
Castell Coch, Wales, 368.
Castell Dinas Bran, 367.
Castle Dangerous, 190, 393.
Castle Street, Edinburgh, Number 39, Scott's residence, 346.
Castleton, 328.
Cat Castle rocks, 94.
Cathcart Castle, 271.
Chambers, Robert, quoted, 202, 204.
Chambers, William, quoted, 163.
Charles I, 90, 225, 233, 319, 322, 326, 374.
Charles II, 184, 242, 325, 326, 330, 332, 334, 335, 376, 385.
Charles of Burgundy, 338, 343, 344, 345, 392.
Chaucer, 374.
Chillingham Castle, 189–190, 191.
Christian, William (William Dhône), 332.
Chronicles of the Canongate, The, 387–394.
Churchill, John, Duke of Marlborough, 374.
Clare, Lady, 61, 63.
Claverhouse, John Grahame of, 170, 171, 179.
Cleikum Inn, 350.
Clerk, William, original of Darsie Latimer, 9, 110, 267.
Clickimin (*Cleik-him-in*), Pictish broch, 298.
Clifford Tower, 250.
Cluden, the river, 126, 205.
Clyde, the river, 172.
Coldingham Abbey, 56.
Coldingham Priory, 222.
Coldstream, 7, 61.
Colmslie, 260.
Comines, Philippe de, 341, 345, 392.
Coningsburgh, Castle of, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250.
Constable, Archibald, 272, 372, 403, 404, 405.
Constable, George, original of Monkbarns, 4, 147.
Constance de Beverly, 54–56, 64.
Corehouse, Lord, 42.
Corra Linn, 172.
Count Robert of Paris, 392.
Cragg Force, 94.
Craighall, 12, 110, 111, 112.
Craignethan Castle, original of Tillietudlem, 172–175.
Craigroyston, 185, 186.
Cranstoun (Lord Corehouse), original of the Baron of Cranstoun, 42.
Cranstoun, Miss (The Countess of Purgstall), 190.
Crichope Linn, 177.
Crichton Castle, 56–58, 221.
Cromwell, Oliver, 241, 374, 376, 377, 385.
Crookston Castle, 270, 271.
Crosbie, Andrew, original of Paulus Pleydell, 141.
Culloden, battle of, 116, 122, 123.
Cumberland, 135, 136.
Cumnor Church, 279.
Cumnor Hall, 272, 273, 276, 277, 278.
Cumnor, the village, 273, 281.
Curle, James, 396.

Dacre, Thomas, Lord, 20, 43.
Daim, Oliver le, 342.
Dalgetty, old soldier, 114.
Dalrymple, James, Lord Stair, original of Sir William Ashton, 215, 216.
Dalzell, General, 179.
Darnley, Henry, Lord, husband of Mary Queen of Scots, 267, 271.
David I, 380.
David II, son of Robert Bruce, 183.
David Deans, house of, 212.
Davidson, James, original of Dandie Dinmont, 137.
Dee, river in Wales, 367.
Deepdale, 94.
Derby, Countess of (Charlotte de la Tremouille), 332.
Derby, Earls of, 332.
Derbyshire, 328.
Devil's Beef Tub, 361.
Dirk Hatteraick's cave, 131, 132.
Dods, Mrs. Margaret, 350.
Don, the river, 247.
Douglas, George, 269, 270.
Douglas, Lady, 269.
Douglas, 'The Little,' original of Roland Graeme, 270.
Douglas, Sir William, 269.
Douglas, village of, 393.
Doune Castle, 12, 80, 120.
Driver, Counsellor Pleydell's clerk, 142.
Drumclog, battle of, 170, 171.
Dryburgh Abbey, 304, 352.
Dryhope, 35.

Dudley, Edmund, 325.
Dudley, Guildford, 274, 325, 326.
Dudley, John, Earl of Warwick and Duke of Northumberland, 274, 277, 281, 325.
Dudley, Robert. *See* Leicester.
Dugald Ciar Mohr, ancestor of Rob Roy, 183.
Dumbarton, 172, 270.
Dumbiedykes, 212.
Dumfries, 126, 127, 130, 131, 135, 191. Maxwelltown observatory, 166; the Mid Steeple, 205; Church of Kirkpatrick Irongray, 207.
Duncan, Rev. Dr., 353.
Duncraggin, 77.
Dundrennan Abbey, 270, 360.
Dunfermline, the Abbey, 40, 304.
Dunottar, Scott's meeting with Old Mortality, 167.
Dunstaffnage, 230, 231, 232, 379.
Dwarfie Stone, the, 312.

Earl's Palace, the, Kirkwall, 307.
Edinburgh, 7, 8. The Old Town, 9, 10; Brown Square, 9; High Street, 141; Parliament Square, 199–202; St. Giles, 60, 199–203; Tolbooth, 9, 200–205, 233; Advocates' Library, 200; Grassmarket, 203, 204; King's Park, 209, 212; Canongate, 209, 266; Salisbury Crags, 7, 8, 60, 210, 389; Queensbury House, 266; the Castle, 346; Castle St., 346; St. Cuthbert's Church, 114; St. Leonard's Crags, 8, 212; the Cowgate, 201; West Bow, 201; St. Anthony's Chapel, 8, 210, 211.
Edward I, 129, 191, 231, 324, 358, 379.
Edward III, 374.
Edward IV, 235, 240.
Edward VI, 274.
Egliston Abbey, 92, 93.
Eildon Hills, the, 38, 347, 352, 396.
Elibank, 36, 49, 106, 139, 352.
Elizabeth, Queen, 272, 273, 274, 275, 286, 287, 321, 326, 332.
Ellen's Isle, 69, 76.
Ellis, George, 32, 52, 96; quoted, 61, 64.
Emerson, Ralph Waldo, opinion of *The Bride of Lammermoor*, quoted, 215.
English Lakes, the, 15, 16, 96.
Engaddi, 369, 370.
Erskine, Rev. John, 10.
Erskine, William, 51, 96, 375.
Esk, vale of the. *See* Roslin Glen.
Etal Castle, 62.
Ethie Castle, 154, 155.
Ettrick Forest, 47.
Ettrick, the river, 175.
Eve of St. John, The, 3, 30.
Eyemouth, 222.

Faa, Gabriel (Tod Gabbie), 138.
Fair Maid of Perth, The, 11, 378–386; house of, 382.
Fairy Dean, 259.
Falkland Castle, 383, 384, 385.
Fast Castle, 220.
Feckless Fannie, original of Madge Wildfire, 213.
Ferguson, Dr. Adam, 15, 160, 162.
Ferguson, Sir Adam, 15, 16, 81, 267.
Field of Waterloo, The, 104.
Fitful Head, the, 300.
Fitz James. *See* James V.
Flodden Field, 7, 53, 58, 61, 62, 64, 257.
'Flower of Yarrow,' the, 35.
Forbes, Sir William, 18, 95, 389.
Ford Castle, 62.
Forth, the river, 188, 192.
Fortunes of Nigel, The, 316–327, 404.
Fort William, 231.
Foster, Anthony, 274, 276, 279.
Fountains Abbey, 243, 244.
Friar Tuck, 237, 243, 252.

Gardiner, Colonel, 4, 116.
Gauger's Loup, the, 131.
Gemmels, Andrew, original of Edie Ochiltree, 6, 148.
George II, 327.
George V, 231, 320, 323.
Gilmerton, 280.
Gilsland, 16, 20, 97, 136, 159, 349.
Glasgow — The Cathedral, 191, 192; the Tolbooth, 192; the Salt Market, 192; the Trongate, 195; Langside, 270.
Glencaple, 127, 357.
Glendearg, 259, 260.
Glen Finglas, 74.
Glenfinlas, 30.
Glenfruin, battle of, 183.
Glengarry. *See* MacDonnel.
Gloucester, Cathedral of, 369.
Goblin Cave, the, 78.
Goldie, Mrs., 207.
Gordon, Jean, original of Meg Merrilies, 6, 7, 138.
Gordon, Madge, Queen of the Gipsies, 6, 138.
Gow, John, original of Cleveland, 313.
Gowrie Conspiracy, 221, 385.
Grahame, John. *See* Claverhouse.
Graham of Killearn, 186–187.
Grassmarket, Edinburgh, 203, 204.
Gratz, Rebecca, original of Rebecca, 252.
Gray Brother, The, 30.
Gray, Daft Jock, original of Davie Gellatley, 118.
Grandtully Castle, 13, 109, 111, 112.

# INDEX


Greenwich Palace, called Placentia, 326.
Greta, the river, 89, 91, 94.
Grey, Lady Jane, 274, 325, 326.
Grey Mare's Tail, 176, 177.
Grierson of Lag, 361.
GUY MANNERING, 126–144; scenes from, in Edinburgh, 10; Liddesdale, 15; England, 16.
Guy's Cliffe, 281.
Gwenwynwyn, Welsh hero, 368, 369.

Haddon Hall, 329, 330, 331.
Hall, Captain Basil, 399.
Hallyards, residence of Dr. Adam Ferguson, 160.
Hal o' the Wynd, house of, 382.
Harden, 35.
Harden, Wat of, 106.
HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS, 104.
Harthill, site of Front-de-Bœuf's castle, 239.
Hastings, William, Lord, 235.
Hawthornden, 24.
Hawthorne, Nathaniel, his opinion of Scotland, 256.
HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN, THE, 8, 199–214, 326.
Heber, Richard, 52.
Henry I, 373.
Henry II, 329, 373.
Henry III, 374.
Henry VII, 240, 274, 335.
Henry VIII, 244, 258, 321, 325, 326.
Heriot, George, 318, 319.
Heron, Lady, 60, 63.
Heron, Sir Hugh, 7, 53.
Herries family, the, 359–360.
HIGHLAND WIDOW, THE, 389, 390.
High Street, Edinburgh, 9, 141.
Hillslap, 260.
Hoddam Castle, 359, 360, 361.
Hogg, James, the Ettrick shepherd, 26, 139, 144, 176.
Holyrood Abbey, 304, 381.
Holyrood Palace, 10, 60, 112, 113, 209, 266, 267.
Hospitalfield, Arbroath, 153.
Howard, Lord William ('Belted Will'), 21, 43, 231.
Hoy, Island of, 312.
Hughes, Mrs., of Uffington, quoted, 124.
Hutton, Richard H., quoted, 64.

Innerleithen, 349.
Inverary Castle, 227, 231.
Inverlochy, battle of, 226, 231–233; Castle, 232.
Inversnaid, 119; the fort, 196; the falls, 197.
Iona, 103, 231.
Irthing River, the, 20, 97, 349.
Irving, John, 7.
Irving, Washington, visit of, to Abbotsford, 252, 396; Scott's letter to, 253; quoted, 41, 47, 145, 146, 347, 398.
IVANHOE, 234–254, 345.

James I of Scotland, 120, 129, 381, 385.
James II of Scotland, 83, 120, 381, 385.
James III, 58, 81, 120.
James IV, 53, 58, 59, 60, 63, 81, 120.
James V, 47, 58, 81; as Fitz James, 67, 75, 79, 80, 84; as 'Gudeman of Ballangeich,' 82, 129, 342, 385.
James VI of Scotland (James I of England), 36, 82, 221, 233, 317–321, 324–327, 385.
James VIII, the 'Old Pretender,' 113.
Jarlshof, Shetland Islands, 294, 298, 299, 300, 308.
Jedburgh, 14.
Jeffrey, Lord, 96; quoted, 64.
Jervaulx Abbey, 242.
John, King, 235, 242, 251, 374.
Jones, Paul, 130.

Keith, Mrs. Murray, original of Mrs. Bethune Baliol, 390.
Keith, Sir Alexander, 109.
Kelso, 5, 6, 7, 26, 150, 353, 358.
KENILWORTH, 272–289.
Kenilworth Castle, 273, 275, 277, 281, 283, 288, 289.
  Mortimer's Tower, 283, 284, 287.
  The Gallery Tower, 283, 284, 286.
  Cæsar's Tower, 284.
  Leicester's Building, 284.
  Henry VIII's Lodgings, 285.
  The White Hall, 285.
  The Presence Chamber, 285.
  The Great Hall, 285, 287.
  Mervyn's Tower, 286, 287.
  The Pleasance, 287.
Kenneth MacAlpine, 231.
Kilpont, Lord, original of the Earl of Menteith, 225–228.
Kilsyth, battle of, 233.
Kinblethmont, 158.
Kinfauns, Castle of, 379.
Kinross, 268.
Kirkcudbright, 130, 131.
Kirk Yetholm, 6, 138.
Kirkwall, capital of the Orkney Islands, 303–309.
Knox, John, 267, 380.

LADY OF THE LAKE, THE, 12, 22, 23, 66–85.
Lag, Castle of, 361.
Laidlaw, William, 347, 348.

# INDEX


Lammermuir Hills, 218, 221.
Lanark, 172.
Lanercost Priory, 20, 44, 97.
Lang, Andrew, quoted, 64, 214, 377.
Langshaw, 260.
Langside, battle of, 270, 271.
Lasswade Cottage, 22, 25, 45, 346.
Lauderdale, Duke of, 179, 180.
Lanrick Mead, 71, 77, 78.
LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL, THE, 21, 28–46, 348; quotation from, 24.
Lediard Falls, 121, 195.
LEGEND OF MONTROSE, A, 4, 224–233.
Leicester, Earl of (Lord Robert Dudley), 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 280, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287.
*Leicester's Commonwealth*, anonymous pamphlet, 276.
Lennel, 7, 61.
Leny, Falls of, 229.
Lerwick, capital of the Shetland Islands, 291–293, 296, 303, 311.
Leslie, General, 225, 233.
Leyden, Dr. John, letter to, 48.
Liddesdale, raids into, 1, 14, 26, 137.
Liège, 319, 343, 344, 345.
LIFE OF NAPOLEON, 372.
Lincluden Abbey, 126, 127.
Lindisfarne Abbey, 54–56.
Lindsay, Sir David, 56, 58.
Linlithgow, 58.
Llangollen, Wales, 366, 367; the 'Ladies' of, 367.
Loch Achray, 12, 74.
Loch Ard, 74, 192, 194, 195.
Loch Arklet, 196.
Loch Corriskin, 100.
Loch Doine, 78.
Loch Fyne, 231.
Loch of Harray, 310.
Loch Katrine, 11, 12, 66, 71, 74, 76, 78, 101, 184, 187.
Loch Leven Castle, 267, 268, 269, 359.
Loch Linnhe, 226, 230, 231, 232.
Loch Lomond, 12, 119, 120, 183–185, 196.
Loch of the Lowes, 175.
Loch Lubnaig, 77, 78, 193, 229.
Loch Oich, 123.
Loch Scavig, 102.
Loch Skene, 176, 177.
Loch of Sleapin, 102.
Loch of Stennis, 310.
Loch Tay, 379.
Loch Vennachar, 12, 71.
Loch Voil, 78, 189, 196.
Loches, Castle of, 341, 342.
Lockhart, John Gibson, 97, 347, 400; quoted, 48, 64, 214, 253, 317, 336, 366, 371, 372, 377, 391.
London, 316, 317, 320, 327, 334, 335.
London Bridge, 325.
LORD OF THE ISLES, THE, 100–105.
Louis XI of France, 338, 339, 340, 341, 343, 344, 345.
Lyulph's Tower, 98.

Macallister's Cave, 102.
MacDonald, Flora, original of Flora MacIvor, 122.
MacDonnel, Colonel Ronaldson, of Glengarry, 123.
MacGregor, Clan, 182–184.
MacGregor, Helen, Rob Roy's wife, 195.
Mackay, Charles, 198.
MacVicar, Minister of St. Cuthbert's, 114.
Maida, Scott's favourite dog, 123, note; 371–375, 398.
Major Oak, the, in Sherwood Forest, 239–240.
'Making' of Sir Walter, the, 1–27.
Malcolm Graeme, 68, 79, 84.
Man, Isle of, 130, 331.
Manor Water, vale of, 15, 160, 163.
Marck, William de la, 342.
Margaret, Lady, of Branksome Hall, 33, 37, 41, 44 45.
MARMION, 7, 8, 20, 47–65, 353; quotations from, 3, 8.
Marquis of Annandale's Beefstand, 361.
Marriott, Rev. John, 50.
Mary, Queen of England, 274, 275, 326, 335.
Mary, Queen of Scots, 58, 81, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 275, 359, 385.
Mathieson, Peter, 399.
Mayburgh, 98.
Meg Merrilies, 131, 137, 138.
'Meikle-mouthed Meg,' story of, 36.
Melrose, 33, 38–42, 45, 106, 255, 258, 265, 266, 304, 347, 348, 352, 399.
Menteith, Lake, 73.
Mercat Cross, of Melrose, 261.
Middleham Castle, 240, 241.
Miller, A. H., quoted, 195.
Millie, Bessie, original of Norna of the Fitful Head, 313, 314.
MINSTRELSY OF THE SCOTTISH BORDER, 15, 25, 29, 31.
Mitchell, Robert, 169, 180.
Moddey Dhoo, legend of the, 334.
Moffat, 172, 175, 176.
Moffat Water, 175.
MONASTERY, THE, 4, 255–264, 348.
Monkbarns (Hospitalfield), 153.
Monmouth, Duke of, 170, 171, 179.
Montrose, Duke of, 182, 185, 187, 196, 202.
Montrose, the Marquis of, 225, 226, 228, 232, 233; sword of, 233.

# INDEX


Morritt, John B. S., 89, 90, 91, 134, 197.
Mortham Castle, 89, 94.
Morton, The Regent, 202.
Mount Sharon, 5.
Mousa, broch of, 247, 300, 301.
Mucklebackit, Saunders, 155–157.
Multon, Sir Thomas de, of Gilsland, 21, 369.
Mump's Ha', 136, 137.
Murdock, Duke of Albany, 129.
Murray, Earl of, 10, 30.
Murray, Sir Gideon, of Elibank, 36.
Muschat's Cairn, Edinburgh, 210.

Nasmyth, Sir James, 162.
Naworth Castle, 20, 43, 44, 231.
Neidpath Castle, 351.
Nethan, the river, 172.
Neville, Richard, Earl of Warwick, 282.
Newark Castle, 35.
Nith, the river, 126, 127, 357.
Norham Castle, 7, 53, 56.

Oakwood Tower, Stronghold of Wat of Harden, 35.
Oban, 230, 231.
Ochil Mountains, 59.
Odin, Stone of, 311, 313.
Old Mortality, 166–181; Tennyson's opinion of, 167.
Originals of Characters —
  Alasco, an Italian physician employed by the Earl of Leicester, 277.
  Lucy Ashton, Janet Dalrymple, 216, 217.
  Lady Ashton, Lady Stair, 216, 217.
  Sir William Ashton, James Dalrymple, Lord Stair, 215, 216.
  Julian Avenel, the Laird of Black Ormiston, 261.
  Mrs. Bethune Baliol, Mrs. Murray Keith, 390.
  Bevis, Maida, Scott's dog, 123, note; 371–375, 398.
  The Black Dwarf, David Ritchie, 160.
  Josiah Cargill, Rev. Dr. Duncan, 353.
  Cleveland, John Gow, 313.
  Baron Cranstoun, George Cranstoun, 42.
  Effie Deans, Isabella Walker, 205–208.
  Jeanie Deans, Helen Walker, 205–208.
  Dandie Dinmont, James Davidson, 137; Willie Elliott, 137; Mr. Laidlaw, 137.
  Meg Dods, Marian Ritchie, 350.
  Driver, a clerk of Andrew Crosbie's, 142–143.
  Alan Fairford, Sir Walter Scott, 9, 362.
  Saunders Fairford, Walter Scott, father of Sir Walter, 9, 363.
  Rachel Geddes, 'Lady' Waldie, 5, 358.
  Davie Gellatley, Daft Jock Gray, 118.
  Roland Graeme, 'The Little Douglas,' 270.
  Dr. Gideon Gray, Dr. Ebenezer Clarkson, 391.
  Dirk Hatteraick, Yawkins, a Dutch skipper, 131.
  Darsie Latimer, William Clerk, 9, 362.
  Alice Lee, Anne Scott, 376.
  Allan McAulay, James Stewart, 227, 228.
  Flora MacIvor, Flora MacDonald, 122.
  Colonel Mannering, Sir Walter Scott, 144.
  Margaret of Branksome, Williamina Stuart, 42.
  Matilda of Rokeby, Williamina Stuart, 95.
  Earl of Menteith, Lord Kilpont, 227.
  Meg Merrilies, Jean Gordon, 6, 138, 148–151.
  Saunders Mucklebackit, George Cargill, 156.
  Tib Mumps, Margaret Carrick, 137; Margaret Teasdale, 137.
  Norna of the Fitful Head, Bessie Millie, 313.
  Edie Ochiltree, Andrew Gemmels, 6.
  Jonathan Oldbuck (Monkbarns), Sir Walter Scott, 4, 146; George Constable, 4, 147
  Old Mortality, Robert Paterson, 166.
  Paulus Pleydell, Andrew Crosbie, 141–142; Adam Rolland, 143.
  Rebecca of York, Rebecca Gratz, 252, 253.
  Sir Robert Redgauntlet, Grierson of Lag, 361.
  Hugh Redgauntlet, one of the Herries family, 359.
  Rob Roy, Robert MacGregor Campbell, 182.
  Dominie Sampson, George Thomson, 140.
  Diana Vernon, Miss Cranstoun, 190; Miss Williamina Stuart, 191; Lady Scott, 191.
  Edward Waverley, Sir Walter Scott, 125.
  Madge Wildfire, Feckless Fannie, 213.
Orkney Islands, Scott's visit to, in a lighthouse yacht, 100.
Osbaldistone Hall (Chillingham Castle), 189–190.
Oxford, University of, 275, 276.

Paterson, Robert, original of Old Mortality, 166–168, 171.
Peat, description of, 295–296.

# INDEX


Peebles, 350, 351, 352.
Peel Castle, Isle of Man, 333.
Penrith, 98.
Péronne, 319, 343, 344.
Perth, 10, 109, 226, 231, 378–382.
Peveril Castle, 328, 330.
PEVERIL OF THE PEAK, 328–336, 404.
Philiphaugh, 233.
Pinkie, battle of, 257.
PIRATE, THE, 290–315.
Plessis les Tours, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341.
Pleydell, Paulus, 135, 140–143.
'Popping Stone,' the, 20.
Porteous, John, 203–204.
Porteous Mob, story of, 205.
Powis Castle, Wales, 368.
'Prentice's Pillar, the, 370.
Prestonpans, 4, 114, 115, 116, 147.
Purdie, Tom, 398, 399.
Purgstall, Countess of, 42.

Queen Margaret's Bower, 58.
QUENTIN DURWARD, 337–346; 347, 404.

Raby Castle, 93.
Raeburn House, 350.
Ramsay, David, 319, 320, 323.
Red Comyn, the, 191.
REDGAUNTLET, 5, 9, 355–364, 404.
Red Head, Cliffs of, 155.
REIVER'S WEDDING, THE, 37.
René, King, 392.
Richard I, 43, 234, 239, 242, 248, 251, 365, 369, 374.
Richard II, 369.
Richard III, 240, 282.
Richmond Castle, 241, 242.
Ritchie David, original of the Black Dwarf, 15, 160.
Robert III, 381, 384.
Robin Hood, 237, 239, 245, 246, 252.
Robin Hood's Well, 246.
Rob Roy, 11, 12, 182–198.
Rob Roy's cave, 119, 197.
Rob Roy's gun, 233.
Robsart, Amy, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 280, 284, 287.
Roderick Dhu, 67, 68, 76, 77, 78, 79.
ROKEBY, 19, 86–95, 96, 104.
Roman wall at Amboglanna, 136.
Rosamond's Well, 373.
Rosebank, 14.
Rose, William Stewart, 50.
Roslin Chapel, 369.
Roslin Glen (vale of the Esk), 22, 23, 24, 30, 45, 89, 94.
Rotherham, 236.
Rothsay, Duke of, 381, 384.
Rushen, Castle, Isle of Man, 331, 332.

Saddleback, 135.
St. Abbs Head, 218, 220.
St. Anthony's Chapel, Edinburgh, 8, 210, 211.
St. Bride, the chapel of, 77.
St. Clair, William, 370.
St. Cuthbert's Church, 114.
St. Cuthbert's Holy Isle, 54–56.
St. Giles Cathedral, 60, 199–203.
St. John, Church of, Perth, 380.
St. John, Valley of, 98.
St. Leonard's Crags, Edinburgh, 8, 212.
St. Magnus, Cathedral of, 304, 305, 306, 307.
St. Margaret's Loch, Edinburgh, 210.
St. Mary's Loch, 35, 175.
ST. RONAN'S WELL, 346–354, 404.
St. Thomas's Abbey (St. Ruth's), 151, 152.
Salisbury Crags, the, Edinburgh, 7, 8, 60, 210, 389.
Sandy Knowe, 2, 51, 353.
Scalloway, Castle of, 298, 302, 303, 309.
Scalloway, village in the Shetland Islands, 302.
Scone, Palace of, 110, 231, 379, 381, 385.
Scott Country, the, limits of, 337, 346, 366.
Scott, Anne, daughter of Sir Walter, 48, 376, 400.
Scott, Charles, son of Sir Walter, 48, 402.
Scott, Daniel, brother of Sir Walter, 383.
Scott, Miss Janet, aunt of Sir Walter, 2, 5.
Scott, John, brother of Sir Walter, 15, 90.
Scott, Lady (wife of Sir Walter), introduction of, to Sir Walter, 17, 329; courtship, 19, 20; marriage, 21; home at Lasswade, 22, 23; reference to Dryburgh, 352, 353; sickness and death, 372, 376, 399.
Scott, Michael, the wizard, 38, 41.
Scott, Mrs. Maxwell-, granddaughter of Sir Walter, 396.
Scott, Sophia, daughter of Sir Walter, 48, 400.
Scott, Thomas, brother of Sir Walter, 333.
Scott, Sir Walter —
Liddesdale raids, 1; residence at Sandy Knowe, 2; visit to Prestonpans, 4; his first pony, 4; at Kelso, 5; passes law examinations, 13; visit to English Lakes, 15; to Gilsland, 16; meets Miss Carpenter, 17, 349; marriage, 21; quartermaster of Edinburgh Volunteers, 25; his memory, 26; decides to abandon the practice of law, 28–30; Sheriff of Selkirk, 29; early poems, 30; Ashestiel, 48, 49; visit to Highlands, 72, 116; purchases Abbotsford, 89; Clerk of Court of Session, 90; aided by Sir William Forbes, 95; later Highland excursion, 119, 120; visit from Joseph Train, 133; visit to Dumfries,

135; to English Lakes, 135; salmon spearing incident, 139; at University of Edinburgh, 139; visited by Irving, 145–146; experience as member of Edinburgh Volunteers, 158–159; visit to Hallyards, 160; visit to Loch Skene, 175–177; visit to the Braes of Balquhidder, 188; clerk of Court of Session, 200; driving through Canongate, 209; suggests building the Radical Road, 210; guest at Studley Royal, 246; visited by Washington Irving, 252; 'refreshing the machine,' 255; presentation to the Duke of Wellington, 266; visit to Shetland Islands, 294, 298, 311, 313, 314; familiarity with history and literature of England, 317; duties as clerk of the Court of Session, 346; residence in Edinburgh, 346; fondness for country life, 347; practices in case of Peter Peebles, 363; visit to Wales, 366; distressing change in personal affairs, 371; announcement of authorship of Waverley Novels, 372; visit to Wicks of Baiglie, Perth, 378; feeling toward brother Daniel, 383; circumstances under which *The Fair Maid of Perth* was written, 386; paying off the debt, 387; writings of the last five years, 388; importunities of a creditor, 389; Theatrical Fund Dinner, 390; spirit of perseverance, 392; apoplexy and other ailments, 393; journey to the Continent, 394; death, 394; personality of, 395; kindness, 397; generosity, 398; conversation, 398; relations with family, 399, 400; creed, 400; ambition, 401; failure of hopes, 402; relations with the Ballantynes, 403, 404; indiscretion, 404; courage and final triumph, 405.

Scott, Walter, 'Beardie,' great-grandfather of Sir Walter, 37.

Scott, Walter, father of Sir Walter, original of Saunders Fairford, 9.

Scott, Walter, son of Sir Walter, 48, 401, 402.

Scott, Sir William, of Harden, 36.

Scott, Sir William, of Buccleuch, 37.

Seymour, Lord, 277.

Sharp, James, Archbishop, 168–169, 180.

Sharpe, Charles Kirkpatrick, 360.

Sherwood Forest, 236, 237.

Shetland Islands, visit to, in a lighthouse yacht, 100.

Shortreed, Robert, 1, 14, 26, 137.

Skene, James of Rubislaw, 52, 338, 392; quoted, 25, 26, 62, 138, 139, 176.

Skiddaw, 135.

Skye, Island of, 100, 102.

Smailholm, 2, 3, 4, 30, 261, 347.

Smellie, William, 141.

Solway Firth, 126, 127, 355, 356, 357.

Somerset, the Duke of, 277.

Staffa, 102.

Stennis, stones of, 310, 311.

Stewart, Alexander of Invernahyle, 116, 117, 118.

Stewart, James, of Ardvoirlich, original of Allan McAulay, 188, 227, 228.

Stewart, Patrick, Earl of Orkney, 298, 302, 308, 309.

Stirling Castle, 66, 78, 80–84, 381.

Stonebyres Linn, 172.

Strathgartney, 78.

Stromness, village in Orkney, 310, 311, 312, 313.

Stuart, Charles Edward, 10, 109, 111, 112, 113, 114, 116, 120, 125, 358, 363.

Stuart, Lady Louisa, 197, 214, 336, 364.

Stuart, Miss Williamina (Lady Stuart-Forbes), Scott's first love, 17, 18, 23; original of Margaret of Branksome, 42; original of Matilda, 95.

Studley Royal, 243, 246.

Sumburgh Head, 294, 296, 297, 298, 300.

Surgeon's Daughter, The, 389, 390.

Sweetheart Abbey, 126, 127, 135.

Swift, Life of, 91.

Tales of the Crusaders, 365–370.

Talisman, The, 21, 345, 365, 369–372.

Tantallon Castle, 60, 61.

Tay, the river, 109, 110, 379.

Teasdale, Margaret, original of Tib Mumps, 137.

Tees, the river, 89, 92, 93, 94.

Teith, the river, 229.

Temple, the, London, 322, 323, 324.

Terry, Daniel, 197, 375.

Teviot, the river, 35.

Thames, the, London, 320, 322.

Thomas the Rhymer, 222.

Thomson, George, original of Dominie Sampson, 140.

Thomson, Rev. John, of Duddingston, 220.

Thoresby House, 238.

Thorsgill, the river, 92, 93.

Tillietudlem. *See* Craignethan.

Tippermuir, battle of, 226.

Tolbooth, Edinburgh, 9, 201–205, 233.

Tours, 339, 341.

Tower of London, 325.

Train, Joseph, provides information used in *The Lord of the Isles*, 103; in *Guy Mannering*, 132–135; in *Old Mortality*, 171; in *The Heart of Midlothian*, 214.

Traquair, Earl of, 108, 109.

Traquair House, 13, 107, 108, 109, 112, 329.

# INDEX


Triermain Castle, 21, 97, 395.
Triermain Castle Rock, 16, 98.
Trossachs, the, 12, 66, 70, 71, 74, 75.
Tully Veolan, 107–111.
Turnberry Castle, 103.
Tweed, the river, 258, 348–352, 396, 397.
Twisel Bridge, 7.
TWO DROVERS, THE, 389, 390, 391.

Ullswater, 97.

Vaux, Sir Roland de, 97.
Vernon, Dorothy, of Haddon Hall, 329.
Villiers, George, first Duke of Buckingham, called 'Steenie,' 319, 322.
Villiers, George, second Duke of Buckingham, 335.

Waldie family, the, of Kelso, 5, 358.
Waldie, 'Lady,' original of Rachel Geddes, 5.
Waldie, Robert, 5.
Wales, 366, 367, 368.
Walker, Helen, original of Jeanie Deans, 205–208.
Walker, Isabella, original of Effie Deans, 205–208.
Walker, Patrick, author of *Life of Cameron*, 213.
Wallace, William, 81.
Wampool River, the, 358.
Wark Castle, 62.
Warrender, Sir George, 109.
Warwick Castle, 281, 282, 283.
Warwick, Earl of, 240.
Warwickshire, 281.
Wat of Harden, 35.
WAVERLEY, 8, 10, 106–125, 197.
Welbeck Abbey, 238.
Welshpool, 368.
Westmoreland, 135.
Whinnyrig, 357.
Whitefoord, Colonel, 116, 117.
Whitefriars (Alsatia), 323, 324.
Whitehall, Palace of, 321, 322, 335.
Wideford Hill, Kirkwall, 309.
William the Conqueror, 241, 248, 250, 282, 328, 373.
William the Lion, 152, 155.
Williams, Rev. John, Archdeacon of Cardigan, 366.
Wolf's Crag, 220.
Wolf's Hope, 222.
WOODSTOCK, 371–377.
Woodstock, village of, 372; palace of, 373–375.
Wordsworth, 16; letter to, 32; 35, 172.
Wright, Guthrie, 57; quoted, 135.
Wycliffe, Oswald, 88.

Yarrow, the river, 175.
Yawkins, Dutch skipper, original of Dirk Hatteraick, 131.
Yetholm Loch, 260.
York, Castle of, 250.
York Minister, 251.
York, city of, 234, 250.
York Water Gate, 322.

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